

COVID-19 Updates

May 1, 2020

WE HAVE MAJOR NEWS!!

We are so excited to let you know that Medicare is now covering physical therapy telehealth services! If you or someone you know has put physical therapy on hold due to insurance coverage, the wait is over! This is the news we all have been waiting for, as it allows us to better serve our community and we couldn't be more excited! Pick up therapy right where you left off but from the safety and comfort of your own home. Not a current patient? That's okay, we can perform an initial evaluation via telehealth as well! Call any 3 of our locations to schedule your telehealth visit today! And please **SPREAD THE WORD** to your Medicare friends and family!!

April 23, 2020

We are continuing to look out for the health and safety of our patients and staff. These are the things that SPT is doing to help "Crush the Curve":

- Screening all patients prior to treatment.
- Staff members will wear masks while treating or assisting patients.
- We ask all patients to bring/wear masks when possible.
- Patient and staff temperatures will be monitored upon arrival.
- Plexiglass barriers are up at our front desks to provide more effective social distancing in our clinics.
- Minimizing the number of individuals in the clinic by asking caregivers and/or family members to wait in the car (or drop off/pick up).
- Maintaining social distancing through rearrangement of the clinic treatment areas, by staggering schedules to minimize simultaneous arrival/departures from the clinic, and shifting patient appointments from the busiest locations to the locations where there are typically fewer staff and patients overall.
- Additional training to our staff on increased sanitization/hand hygiene recommendations
- Advising our staff to stay home if they are feeling unwell, or have travelled by air in the last 14 days, or have had close contact with someone who has travelled by air or who is sick within the previous 14 days.
- Increasing the frequency of cleaning ALL items in the clinic.
- Monitoring information from our health authorities to adjust our plan based on recommendations.

The above list is all in addition to the standard practices that our patients have always experienced at Specialized Physical Therapy , which include:

- All of our linens are single use. They are washed in hot water using chlorine bleach plus detergent, and then dried on high heat.
- Wiping down of all treatment beds and equipment after each use with hospital grade disinfectant.
- Our clinics are fully equipped with hand washing stations as well as hand sanitizer. Cleaning high-touch areas with medical grade disinfectant (e.g., door handles, common area surfaces, railings, chairs, light switches, payment machines, exercise equipment and treatment tools).
- Our staff wash/sanitize their hands thoroughly between treating each patient.

We continue to support our community's efforts to "Crush the Curve".

April 20, 2020

Specialized Physical Therapy is now offering telehealth! These virtual visits allow you to get the care you need without having to come into the clinic.

Scheduling a Virtual Visit

1. Call any of our three locations and request a telehealth appointment. Our front desk will help answer any questions you may have.
2. Once your appointment is on the books, you'll receive an email with instructions and a link about how to create and set up your telehealth account. Please have your account set up at least 30 minutes prior to your appointment time to troubleshoot any problems that may or may not occur.
3. If there is any intake information that needs to be collected via fax or email, the front desk will call you 30 minutes prior to your appointment (i.e. Initial evaluation).
4. Prior to your scheduled visit, make sure you are in an area where you have plenty of room to move around and perform exercises.
5. When your appointment time comes and your therapist is ready, you will receive an email with a link to join the video call. Click the link and sign into your Medbridge account.
6. Enjoy your virtual visit with your therapist!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is telehealth?

A: Using video chat technologies to guide, advise, educate, monitor, and direct you in your healthcare needs as we would in the clinic, but from the safety of your home.

Q: What is a telehealth visit?

A: A telehealth visit will give you (the patient) the ability to meet one-on-one with our therapists from the comfort of your own home through a video chat call. During a telehealth visit the therapist will be able to effectively walk you through the exercises of a normal appointment and answer any questions you may have. (You will need to use a computer or other device with a camera, positioned so that your therapist can see you and provide instructions/feedback while you do your exercises).

Q: Will my virtual care cost be covered by insurance?

A: Several major insurance carriers are now making it easier for you to obtain the physical therapy care that you need, via telehealth. To allow even easier access, some carriers, including Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS), UHC, and others are waiving all patient cost-sharing - that's right, \$0 deductible and \$0 copay!

Q: What if I have Medicare? What can I do?

A#1: Schedule an E-visit. This is a 15-30 minute phone call. The therapist checks-in with the patient to see how they are doing, answer questions, problem solve issues. E-visits have been approved as a covered service by Medicare.

A#2: Medicare patients may request to have a telehealth appointment instead of an e-visit. The telehealth appointment would then be provided at CASH-PAY rates. *Medicare does NOT cover telehealth visits at this time--Stay tuned for potential further developments in this policy*

Q: Can I start with telehealth if I am not a current patient?

A#1: Yes, an initial evaluation can be performed via telehealth for commercial insurances. With telehealth we are effectively able to bring on new patients while keeping you safe in your home.

A#2: Medicare has not yet approved telehealth services HOWEVER if you have Medicare, you can schedule a telehealth visit via cash-pay rates (see answer #2 in previous question).

Q: How long do telehealth visits last?

A: A telehealth visit will be the same length as a normal appointment in the clinic.

Q: Can I pay cash for telehealth?

A: Yes you can! Our normal cash pay rates for in clinic setting would apply for telehealth visits as well.

Q: What type of devices can I use for my virtual visit?

A: You can use your laptop (preferred method) or desktop computer, provided you have a microphone, camera and internet capabilities. You can also use iOS and Android devices (phones or tablets).

Q: How do I get started?

A: Call our office at any time and request a telehealth appointment with any of our therapists!

108th & Maple	76th & Pacific	121st & I St. (Inside UBA)
402-939-7939	402-763-8774	402-939-7939

April 9, 2020

Telehealth Physical Therapy Visits - Scheduling Now!

Several major insurance carriers are now making it easier for you to obtain the physical therapy care that you need, right from the comfort and safety of your own home. To allow even easier access, some carriers, including Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS), UHC, and others are waiving all patient cost-sharing - that's right, \$0 deductibe and \$0 copay!*

Although Medicare is not covering telehealth visits at this time, this service is offered for Medicare beneficiaries at a cash pay rate. HOWEVER, things seem to be changing by the minute as our health care system is continuing to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. We are finding ways to provide the health care services that people need - so please stay tuned on that. Check the NEWS tab on our website for ongoing updates.

Specialized Physical Therapy is still open to provide in-person care, but telehealth will provide an excellent alternative for those who are in a higher risk category for exposure, or for those who would simply feel

better about obtaining their care right at home.

As we are coping with so many changes in our routines during this crisis, it's more important than ever to take care of our health and safety. While many of us are hunkering down to help avoid the spread of this virus, telehealth will make it possible to move forward with quality physical therapy treatments.

Get Started with Telehealth Physical Therapy from Home!

Specialized Physical Therapy is now introducing a LIVE Virtual One-on-One Video Appointment System that allows you to meet your physical therapist without stepping out of your home.

With Our LIVE Video Appointment Tool:

- Obtain physical therapy care right from the comfort and safety of your own home.
- Continue your existing PT treatment or even get started on a new course of treatment
- Therapists can tailor your exercises to the set-up of your home, using the furniture and items (make-shift equipment) that's already available in your particular space.
- Fine tune your home exercise program with supervision and direction provided by your therapist in real time.
- Obtain the PT services you need, even if you are in one of the higher-risk categories for COVID-19 exposure.

Our goal is to help you obtain the care you need and progress toward a healthier tomorrow - this video appointment system allows us to do just that!

Please call us directly at (402) 939-7939 so we can talk to you personally and get you taken care of!

Interested in scheduling a telehealth appointment?

Call for an appointment at any of our 3 locations:

108th & Maple	76th & Pacific	121st & I St. (Inside UBA)
402-939-7939	402-763-8774	402-939-7939

*Subject to the terms of each individual insurance plan. Call us with your insurance card in hand and we can help verify your plan's specific benefits.

March 22, 2020

At Specialized Physical Therapy, your health and well-being is our top priority.

We are monitoring recommendations from the health authorities and we are open to provide the personal care needed for our patient's treatment and journey to recovery.

We would like to share some details on the standard daily practices, which we have always had at our clinics, in addition to extra steps we are taking related to the virus.

Standard practices that our patients have always experienced at Specialized Physical Therapy

include:

- All of our linens are single use. They are washed in hot water using chlorine bleach plus detergent, and then dried on high heat.
- Wiping down of all treatment beds and equipment after each use with hospital grade disinfectant.
- Our clinics are fully equipped with hand washing stations as well as hand sanitizer.
Cleaning high-touch areas with medical grade disinfectant (e.g., door handles, common area surfaces, railings, chairs, light switches, payment machines, exercise equipment and treatment tools).
- Our staff wash/sanitize their hands thoroughly between treating each patient.

Additional steps we are taking now include:

- Screening all patients prior to treatment.
- Minimizing the number of individuals in the clinic by asking caregivers and/or family members to wait in the car (or drop off/pick up).
- Maintaining social distancing through rearrangement of the clinic treatment areas, by staggering schedules to minimize simultaneous arrival/departures from the clinic, and shifting patient appointments from the busiest locations to the locations where there are typically fewer staff and patients overall.
- Additional training to our staff on increased sanitization/hand hygiene recommendations
- Advising our staff to stay home if they are feeling unwell, or have travelled by air in the last 14 days, or have had close contact with someone who has travelled by air or who is sick within the previous 14 days.
- Increasing the frequency of cleaning all items listed above.
- Monitoring information from our health authorities to adjust our plan based on recommendations.

We know that the COVID-19 virus can be alarming and a bit scary. At Specialized Physical Therapy, we see this as a partnership journey with you as we make it a priority to take care of each other.

The steps that we have put in place are due both to our love for our patients but also for our great staff who are here for our patients.

We can all play a role in this joint battle against the virus.

We respectfully request that our patients:

- Please stay home and reschedule your appointment if you answer "yes" to any of these screening questions:
 - ◆ *Do you currently have a cough, fever or shortness of breath?*
 - ◆ *In the last 14 days, did you travel internationally or to the areas where COVID-19 (Coronavirus) is widespread?*
 - ◆ *In the last 14 days, did you have close contact with a suspected or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 (Coronavirus) patient?*
 - ◆ *Do you have any of the following medical conditions: Heart disease, Lung disease, Kidney disease, Chemotherapy, HIV, or other Immune disorders such as Lupus, Rheumatoid arthritis, Long term use of prednisone or other immunosuppressive medications, Organ transplantation or absence of spleen?*
- Wash their hands before leaving home for therapy and use hand sanitizer in our lobby at the start and end of treatment.

Here are some tips that we can all follow in our daily lives to help minimize our risk:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water (for at least 20 seconds). Alcohol based hand sanitizer is a good option if soap and warm water is not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with the inside of your elbow when coughing or sneezing.
- Regularly clean high touch objects and surfaces.
- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- If you feel sick, stay home and avoid public spaces.

At Specialized Physical Therapy, the health of our patients is the cornerstone of our existence. We look forward to continuing to be a partner in your health and wellness journey and taking steps with our patients to create a healthy and sanitary environment.

The team @ Specialized Physical Therapy