

What is Hand Therapy?

Hand therapy is the **art** and **science** of evaluating and treating injuries and conditions of the upper extremity (shoulder, arm, elbow, forearm, wrist and hand). Hand therapy uses a number of therapeutic interventions to help return a person to their highest level of function.

Hand therapy evolved from the need for a specialist with the **knowledge** and **experience** required to manage the challenging recovery of complex hand and upper extremity injuries.

Therapeutic Interventions



Professional Background of Hand Therapists

Who Are Hand Therapists?

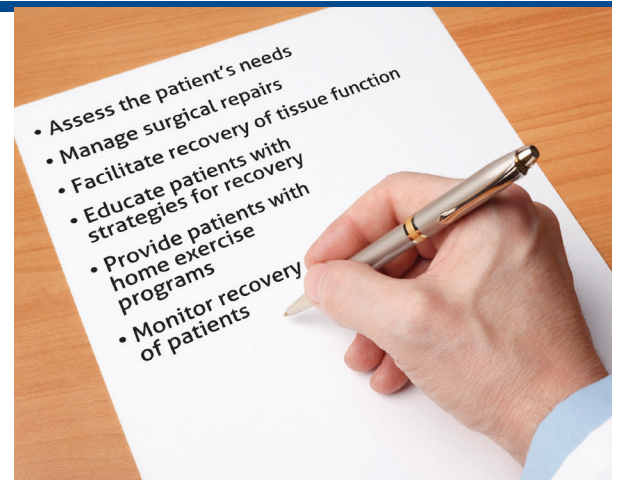
Hand therapists are licensed or registered occupational therapists or physical therapists who, through advanced **study** and **experience**, specialize in treating individuals with conditions affecting the hands and upper extremity.

To obtain the CHT credential, a hand therapist must practice as an OT or PT for a minimum of **five years**, accumulating at least **4,000 hours** of hand and upper extremity experience. Hand therapists must also pass a rigorous certification examination to demonstrate their competency in the practice of hand therapy.

What Can Hand Therapists Do For Their Patients?

Hand therapists can help bridge the gap from the medical management of a patient's injury or condition to a successful recovery, allowing the patient to **function normally** in their **daily lives**.

In addition to patient care, hand therapists often assist providers by performing clinical testing to identify dysfunction to assist or confirm a diagnosis.



How Can I See a Hand Therapist?

Some states require patients to have an order/prescription from a provider (MD, DO, NP or PA).

To locate an occupational therapist or physical therapist with a specialization in hand therapy, visit the American Society of Hand Therapists website at www.asht.org.

