



## ADVANCED PHYSICAL THERAPY & HEALTH SERVICES, LLC

is a private, physical therapist-owned outpatient physical therapy clinic specializing in neurologic, orthopedic, and vestibular conditions.

All patients are evaluated by a licensed physical therapist.

We guarantee to see you for an initial evaluation in 24-48 hours.

We have early morning and late evening hours for convenient scheduling.

We accept and are in-network with most insurance companies, including PPO's, HMO's, Medicare, Tricare, and Workers' Compensation.

Conditions we evaluate and treat include, but are not limited to:

- Neck & back injuries/pain
- Arthritis
- Vertigo
- Sprains/Strains
- Parkinson's Disease
- Fractures
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Tendonitis
- Gait & balance disorders
- Bursitis
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Stroke
- Sports injuries
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Work-related injuries
- TMJ disorder/pain
- Nerve injuries / disorders
- Joint replacements
- Cervicogenic headaches
- Orthopedic surgeries



## ADVANCED PHYSICAL THERAPY & HEALTH SERVICES, LLC

*This brochure is compliments of:*

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## What is Peripheral Neuropathy?



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# Peripheral Neuropathy

## What is Peripheral Neuropathy?

Peripheral neuropathy occurs when there is a problem with the nerves that carry information to and from the brain and spinal cord to the rest of the body. Typically, peripheral neuropathy symptoms are felt in the longest nerves, the ones that reach the finger tips and/or toes, and may gradually travel up the arms and legs. Peripheral neuropathy symptoms vary depending on which nerves are affected: the sensory nerves (that carry sensation), the motor nerves (that control muscles), or the autonomic nerves (that carry information to organs and glands). Typical symptoms include a gradual onset of tingling, numbness, or burning sensation in the hands or feet, lack of coordination, muscular weakness, and/or sensitivity to touch. People often describe their numbness as feeling as if they are wearing a thin pair of gloves or socks.

## Other common symptoms:

Sharp jabbing pain, painful cramps, extreme sensitivity even to light touch, inability to differentiate between hot and cold, decreased muscle control, feeling off balance, and possible bowel and bladder problems if the autonomic nerves are affected.



## What are some causes?

**Trauma or pressure on the nerve**— motor vehicle accidents, sports injuries, and falls can cause differing degrees of damage to the nerve(s)

**Diabetes**— is the leading cause of peripheral neuropathy in the U.S.; uncontrolled blood sugar levels can cause damage to the nerves

**Vitamin deficiencies**— B1, B6, B12, Vitamin E and niacin are important for nerve health

**Alcoholism**—can cause Thiamine deficiency, which can lead to peripheral neuropathy; also poor dietary habits can be a factor

**Infections and Autoimmune disorders**— such as Lupus, Guillain-Barre, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Shingles, Epstein-Barr, Lyme disease and hepatitis C

**Inherited disorders**—the most common is Charcot-Marie-Tooth—which is characterized by the weakening and wasting of muscles in the lower legs and feet, abnormal gait, loss of tendon reflex, and numbness

**Tumors**— can cause pressure to a nerve, depending on its location and size

**Unknown**— many times the cause is unknown

## When to see the doctor

Call and make an appointment right away with your doctor if you are experiencing any unusual numbness or tingling in the hands and feet, or if symptoms get worse.

Early care and treatment can prevent further damage to the nerve.

Complications that can occur due to peripheral neuropathy include the inability to feel temperature change or to detect injury. It is important to frequently check areas that have decreased sensation for any new injuries. This is especially important for diabetics because insufficient blood flow can prevent injuries from healing quickly, creating a higher risk for infection. Decreased sensation in the feet can also make a person feel off balance, which contributes to a higher risks for falls.

## Recommendations:

- Maintain healthy diet and weight
- Quit smoking and limit alcohol use
- Take care of your feet
- Massaging hands and feet may help improve circulation

## Treatments may include:

- Use of proper assistive devices as needed
- Controlling symptoms with medication(s)
- Correcting vitamin deficiencies
- Physical therapy—to help strengthen and retrain muscles and nerve activity; to help prevent falls; to improve and/or prevent further decline in balance

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