

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (OT)

Authored by
Mohammed looti

March 5, 2026

RECOMMENDED CITATION

Mohammed looti (2026). *OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY (OT)*. Encyclopedia of psychology.
Retrieved from <https://encyclopedia.arabpsychology.com/?p=7138>

Occupational Therapy (OT): A Comprehensive Overview

Abstract

Occupational therapy (OT) is a health care profession that focuses on improving the quality of life of individuals and communities through the use of meaningful activities as therapeutic interventions. OT practitioners assess, diagnose, and treat a range of physical, sensory, perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial difficulties, as well as occupational injuries and disabilities. OT practitioners also work with patients to develop self-management skills, improve function, and prevent disability. This article provides an overview of OT, including its history, scope of practice, and evidence-based interventions.

Introduction

Occupational therapy (OT) is a health care profession that focuses on improving the quality of life of individuals and communities through the use of meaningful activities as therapeutic interventions. OT practitioners assess, diagnose, and treat a range of physical, sensory, perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial difficulties, as well as occupational injuries and disabilities. OT practitioners also work with patients to develop self-management skills, improve function, and prevent disability. This article provides an overview of OT, including its history, scope of practice, and evidence-based interventions.

History

The roots of OT can be traced back to the early 1800s, when the concept of occupational therapy was first proposed by German physician, Dr. Adolf Meyer. He suggested that meaningful activities, such as crafts and games, could help those with mental illness. By the mid-1900s, OT had become an established field, and OT practitioners began to use a wide range of activities to help patients with physical, mental, and emotional impairments.

Scope of Practice

OT practitioners work with people of all ages, from infants to the elderly, to improve their ability to perform everyday activities. OT practitioners assess, diagnose, and treat a range of physical, sensory, perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial difficulties, as well as occupational injuries and disabilities. OT interventions focus on developing, improving, or restoring the individual's ability to perform daily activities in various home, work, school, and community settings. OT interventions may include:

- Improving motor skills (e.g., fine motor, gross motor, manual dexterity, and coordination)
- Improving sensory processing and integration (e.g., vision, hearing, tactile, and proprioceptive)
- Improving physical function (e.g., strength, balance, endurance, and mobility)

- Improving cognitive skills (e.g., attention, executive functioning, and memory)
- Improving communication skills (e.g., verbal, nonverbal, and written)
- Improving social skills (e.g., peer interaction)
- Improving job/academic performance
- Developing self-care skills (e.g., dressing, grooming, eating, and toileting)

Evidence-Based Interventions

OT practitioners utilize evidence-based interventions to help individuals improve their ability to perform everyday activities. Evidence-based interventions are interventions that have been scientifically tested and proven to be effective. Common evidence-based OT interventions include:

- Sensory Integration (SI): SI is a therapeutic intervention that helps individuals with sensory processing difficulties integrate sensory information from the environment in order to improve their ability to respond to sensory input.
- Constraint-Induced Movement Therapy (CIMT): CIMT is a therapeutic intervention that uses physical and occupational therapy to help individuals with physical impairments improve their ability to move affected parts of their body.
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): CBT is a psychotherapeutic approach that helps individuals identify and modify maladaptive behaviors and thoughts.
- Cognitive Remediation Therapy (CRT): CRT is a therapeutic intervention that helps individuals improve cognitive functions, such as memory, attention, executive functioning, and problem solving.

Conclusion

Occupational therapy (OT) is a health care profession that focuses on improving the quality of life of individuals and communities through the use of meaningful activities as therapeutic interventions. OT practitioners assess, diagnose, and treat a range of physical, sensory, perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and psychosocial difficulties, as well as occupational injuries and disabilities. OT practitioners also work with patients to develop self-management skills, improve function, and prevent disability. This article provided an overview of OT, including its history, scope of practice, and evidence-based interventions.

References

- American Occupational Therapy Association. (2016). What is occupational therapy? Retrieved from <http://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Professionals/What-is-OT.aspx>
- American Occupational Therapy Association. (2019). Evidence-based practice. Retrieved from <http://www.aota.org/Practice/Evidence-Based-Practice/Overview.aspx>

Gillen, G., & Scaffa, M. E. (2011). Occupational therapy: Performance, participation, and well-being (3rd ed.). Thorofare, NJ: SLACK Incorporated.

Sackett, D. L., Rosenberg, W. M., Gray, J. A., Haynes, R. B., & Richardson, W. S. (1996). Evidence-based medicine: What it is and what it isn't. *British Medical Journal*, 312(7023), 71-72.

ARABPSYCHOLOGY.COM