

Industrial Rehab

Work Hardening/Work Conditioning

WORK HARDENING/WORK CONDITIONING

Peak Physical Therapy provides our Work Hardening Program to facilitate an early and safe return to work. The program is a progressive work therapy using conditioning tasks to improve the workers' overall physical fitness (strength and endurance), as well as to document consistent use of appropriate body mechanics.

A complete evaluation of the worker's abilities and the job requirements is performed (an FCE). The total length of the program is typically 4 to 6 weeks, attending 3-5 days per week. The program consists of physical strengthening and conditioning exercises, body mechanics activities, educational program and job simulation tasks. The treatment program consists of four goals:

Phase 1 – To assess base line physical capacities, set program goals and initiate flexibility exercises.

Phase 2 – to regain strength, improve mobility and endurance. The length of this phase is typically one to two weeks and includes therapeutic exercises, flexibility and strengthening, aerobic conditioning and instruction on pacing and appropriate use of body mechanics.

Phase 3 – To increase strength and endurance through material handling activities and weight training as the patient continues with Phase 2 activities. This phase usually continues for two weeks.

Phase 4 – To continue strengthening and begin job simulation to determine successful return to work. This phase can last from one to two weeks.

A formal re-evaluation is performed every two weeks to assess the workers' progress toward targeted discharge goals. A full FCE is performed at the conclusion of the program to confirm discharge parameters and ensure that the worker is fit for the work.

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