

Human Lactation Perspectives for the Physical Therapist

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, the learner will be able to:

- Discuss the role of the physical therapist, recommendations from WHO and UNICEF, and APTA scope of practice.
- Explain, in detail, the anatomy of the breast tissue, the breast lymphatic system, breast muscular system, breast nervous system, thoracic spine, ribs, as well as infant oral anatomy.
- Explain how human milk is made, the elements of production, role of hormones, and how feeding patterns influence milk supply.
- Describe engorgement and perform manual breast lymphatic drainage techniques, rib mobility, thoracic mobility required to decrease effects of engorgement.
- Explain, using evidence, how to support mothers during their birthing process and immediate postpartum period for exclusive breastfeeding including medications used during the birth process and positional suggestions to decrease use of medications.
- Describe the “breast crawl” and the importance of the “Golden Hour”.
- List specific steps required for infant latch including biomechanical requirements and be able to identify a correct latch.
- Discuss proper infant feeding.
- Describe common breastfeeding problems and offer evidence-based solutions to protect exclusive breastfeeding.
- Describe and implement breastfeeding positional suggestions that support the mother’s orthopedic conditions as well as baby conditions while protecting the infant latch and exclusive breastfeeding.
- Identify and list circumstances when referral should be made to lactation professional and physician.