

September 2008



# NEWSLETTER

*M & M Physical Therapy, LLC  
Columbus 609-324-1200, Mt. Laurel 856-234-4600, Marlton 856-988-7999  
www.mmptnj.com*

## WILL MEDICARE COVER MY PHYSICAL THERAPY?

*By Matthew A. Mesibov, PT, GCS,  
Board Certified Specialist in Geriatric Physical Therapy*

Physical therapy is a covered benefit under Medicare, similar to visits to your family physician. Under current Medicare policy, when physical therapy is “medically necessary”, it is generally anticipated that the patient will be seen 2 or 3 times a week, as long as the patient is progressing towards their “functional goals”.

Medical necessity is established by the problems described by the patient, and the therapist’s professional judgment as to the likelihood of helping the patient. The therapist must include a detailed description of the patient’s complaints, and how function is impacted. Functional goals are those activities that are necessary and desirable for the patient to function and conduct daily life activities (not all activities a person does will be viewed as necessary by Medicare policy).

Another consideration for coverage of therapy services is the “Medicare Cap”. This is a total amount of dollars that Medicare will spend for a combination of physical and speech therapy, and separately for occupational therapy. At this time, the cap for each is \$1810 during a calendar year. There are, however, exceptions to this sum, as long as treatment is deemed medically necessary.

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## PARTNERS

**Ruth Lyons, PT**

*ruth@mmptnj.com*

**Brett Michener, PT, CSCS**

*brett@mmptnj.com*

**Steven J. Platt, PT, ATC**

*steven@mmptnj.com*

## Our Office Staff

**Brant Navoa, PT**

*brant@mmptnj.com*

**Matthew Mesibov, PT, GCS**

*matt@mmptnj.com*

**Kathleen Green, PTA**

**Kathy Sezack**

Columbus Office Manager

*kathy@mmptnj.com*

**Deanna Cleaver**

Mt. Laurel Office Manager

*dee@mmptnj.com*

**Suzanne Capuano**

Marlton Office Manager

*sue@mmptnj.com*

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## Medicare (cont'd from page 1)

During this time of “cost containment”, the Medicare therapy cap is one method of containing costs, but also, at times, treatment. To learn more about the Medicare Cap, and what you can do to make your voice heard, go to [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org) and click on “Information for Consumers” (located on the left).

Medicare, through a contracted company, is currently evaluating alternative systems to pay physical therapists and other suppliers of covered Medicare services. One of the leading proposals is reimbursement based on outcomes.

Another item of interest is that Medicare is becoming more involved in providing coverage for “preventative services”. This is an effort to keep our aging population healthier. At this time, a physical therapy evaluation is not a covered preventative service. However, it is this author’s opinion that an assessment of function and balance is advisable. This baseline evaluation will provide a goal to work toward in the event of future problems requiring physical therapy services. To find out more about Medicare covered preventative services, go to website: [www.medicare.gov/health/overview.asp](http://www.medicare.gov/health/overview.asp).

## Steve’s Sports Trivia Question of the Month

Who is the only goalie in the NHL history to score two goals????

## Dee’s Recipe Corner

### **Crowd Pleasing Hoagie Dip**

½ lb cooked ham

1 cup shredded iceberg lettuce

½ lb hard salami

½ lb provolone cheese

½ cup diced tomatoes

¼ cup minced onions

½ cup mayonnaise

1 tsp oregano

salt and pepper to taste

Chop the ham, salami and cheese into cubes. Add the tomatoes, onions, lettuce, salt, pepper and oregano. Mix in mayonnaise to coat the ingredients. This recipe can easily be made a day ahead. Serve with sliced baguette bread or mini hoagie rolls.

## Upcoming Events

Interactive Discussions on Improving Balance and Fall Prevention

October 11, 2008

Four Seasons at Mapleton  
Columbus, NJ

October 16, 2008

Evesham Township Seniors Group  
Gibson House at Indian Springs, Evesham, NJ

If you would like us to speak to your group please contact us at any of our offices.

## Brett’s Product Pick of the Month

Product: Starbucks® Branch Tumbler

Price: \$10.95

Great for drinks on the go!

Purchase at Starbucks®, [www.starbucks.com](http://www.starbucks.com)

Overall Rating: 4.5 / 5

**Pros:** A good travel mug is hard to find. Through years of searching, I finally located one worth mentioning. This Starbucks® mug has a non-spill, locking lid with premium air flow, no handle for easy one-handed use, and it keeps your drinks hot for hours!

**Cons:** As with most plastic mugs this one cannot go in the dishwasher or microwave. If you don’t finish your beverage on the first round, you will need to add more of your hot beverage rather than throwing it in the microwave.

