

Autoimmune Disorders in the Hands: Diagnosis, Treatment, and Therapeutic Interventions

3 CE HOURS / .3 CEUs

PDH Academy Course #OT-1705

Course Abstract

This course examines scleroderma, Raynaud's phenomenon, and rheumatoid arthritis, three common autoimmune disorders that impact the hands. It discusses applicable definitions and terminology; their etiology, prevalence, diagnosis, and medical interventions; the normal joint anatomy and functional position of the hand; and the role of therapy as it pertains to their treatment.

Target audience: Occupational Therapists, Occupational Therapy Assistants, Physical Therapists, Physical Therapy Assistants (no prerequisites).

NOTE: Links provided within the course material are for informational purposes only. No endorsement of processes or products is intended or implied.



This course is offered for 0.3 CEUs (Intermediate level; Category 2 – Occupational Therapy Process: Evaluation; Category 2 – Occupational Therapy Process: Intervention; Category 2 – Occupational Therapy Process: Outcomes).

The assignment of AOTA CEUs does not imply endorsement of specific course content, products, or clinical procedures by AOTA.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- Recognize definitions and terminology pertaining to autoimmune disorders in the hand
- Differentiate between the etiology and prevalence of scleroderma, Raynaud's phenomenon, and rheumatoid arthritis
- Identify elements of medical diagnosis and treatment of autoimmune disorders in the hand
- Recognize the normal joint anatomy and functional position of the hand
- Identify roles of therapy as it pertains to autoimmune disorders in the hand

Timed Topic Outline

- I. Introduction, Definitions and Terminology (5 minutes)
- II. Autoimmune Disease Overview (10 minutes)
- III. Scleroderma (15 minutes)
- IV. Raynaud's Phenomenon vs. Raynaud's Disease (15 minutes)

V. Rheumatoid Arthritis (15 minutes)

VI. Anatomical Considerations for Autoimmune Disease in the Hands (5 minutes)

VII. The Role of Therapy (100 minutes)

History, Evaluation and Provocative Testing, Treatment

VIII. Conclusion, Additional Resources, References, and Exam (15 minutes)

Delivery & Instructional Method

Distance Learning – Independent. Correspondence/internet text-based self-study, including a provider-graded multiple choice final exam.

To earn continuing education credit for this course, you must achieve a passing score of 80% on the final exam.

Registration & Cancellation

Visit www.pdhtherapy.com to register for online courses and/or request correspondence courses.

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Accessibility and/or Special Needs Concerns?

Contact Customer Service by phone at (888)564-9098 or email at support@pdhacademy.com.

Course Author Bio & Disclosure

Amy L. Paulson, OTR, CHT, is a certified hand therapist with over 19 years of experience in outpatient upper extremity care. She has been a licensed occupational therapist for 20 years, has experience in home health, skilled nursing, and acute care, and is a member of the American Society of Hand Therapists.

Amy has led multiple community-based classes on arthritis care, energy conservation and work simplification, and she taught as an adjunct professor at Palm Beach Community College in the OTA program. She designs and instructs hands-on continuing education courses in splinting and upper extremity treatment, and enjoys providing clinical instruction to students interested in specializing in hand therapy. She is also involved in coordinating and overseeing therapy programs in Gulu, Uganda by volunteering with the Medical Missions Foundation of Overland Park, KS.

Amy currently owns and operates her private practice in outpatient hands, where she provides patient care, clinical instruction to Level II students, community education, marketing, and insurance billing.

DISCLOSURES: Financial – Amy Paulson received a stipend as the author of this course. Nonfinancial – No relevant nonfinancial relationship exists.