Position Statement – North Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners

Removal of Sutures or Staples by a PT or PTA

Adopted – August 11, 2006 (PT); July 13, 2007 (PTA)
Reviewed – September 23, 2010

Position on Removal of Sutures or Staples by a Physical Therapist

Posted on NC Board of PT Examiners Web Page – August 11, 2006

Q: Can a physical therapist remove sutures or staples?

A: While this procedure is not a part of the scope of practice of a physical therapist, the Board has determined that a properly trained physical therapist can perform this procedure provided that he/she makes it very clear to the patient that this is not physical therapy and does not bill it as such.

Position on Removal of Sutures or Staples by a Physical Therapist Assistant

Posted on NC Board of PT Examiners Web Page – July 13, 2007

Q: Can a physical therapist assistant remove sutures and staples?

A: Since this procedure is not within the scope of practice of physical therapy, the Board cannot take a position on whether a PTA can perform this procedure; however, it is important to reiterate the basic premise that the supervising physical therapist is ultimately responsible for the activities of the PTA.

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