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Peke Waihanga
Artificial Limb Service

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FACT SHEET

Rehab Psychology



What is a Rehab Psychologist?

Rehab Psychologists work with the Peke Waihangā Centre team to support individuals following amputation.

Having an amputation is a significant adjustment which can have an impact on some or all areas of life.

As a result, many people following amputation experience some of the following at different stages in their recovery journey:

- Low mood, sadness, and/or despair
- High levels of distress, which may include anxiety/worry, fears, and feelings of stress
- Feelings of loss and grief
- Feelings of not coping
- Frustration and/or anger
- Change in body image and self-esteem
- Self-medicating against emotional distress through use of substances
- Chronic pain

Supporting you to work through these emotions is an important part of your rehabilitation journey, in the same way as attention is paid to physical needs.

Seeing a Rehab Psychologist does not mean you aren't coping.

In the same way as a Physio assists by suggesting exercises for an injury, a Rehab Psychologist provides suggestions that can help you to navigate the emotional journey of recovery following amputation.

How can a Rehab Psychologist help me?

Rehab psychologists assist you and your support system to cope with and adapt to the effects of injury or illness. We are part of the team to support your wellbeing.

We take a practical approach and provide you with education and strategies you can use to help you adjust to and manage the emotional impact of having an amputation.

We aim to ensure our approach is best suited to your individual needs. We work with you to identify what you feel will be the most helpful strategies you can continue to do as part of your self-management.

What can I expect from the first 1 – 2 sessions?

The first part is getting to know you and to understand the challenges you may be having during your recovery journey. This will involve asking some questions about your circumstances, day to day functioning, and a little bit about your background.

If it's ok with you, we may also talk with your important supports so that we are all on the same page. Together we will make a plan on what areas to focus on and strategies will be offered.

You are welcome to bring a support person with you to your session.

What comes next?

After these initial sessions, the Rehab Psychologist will discuss with you whether further sessions would be helpful, and how many.

As the Rehab Psychologist is part of the Peke Waihangā Centre team, they will (after consultation with you) put together a simple summary of goals for therapy and share this with the Centre team who is working with you.

If you would like to access more fact sheets, please visit our website www.nzals.co.nz/resources/

