

## SPINAL MANIPULATION

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### Preamble

The Nova Scotia College of Physiotherapists regulates the practice of physiotherapy<sup>1</sup> in Nova Scotia through the administration of the Physiotherapy Act and regulations. For the purposes of this Practice Standard the NSCP has adopted the [Spinal Manipulations Competency Profile](#) published in 2008 by the College of Physiotherapists of Alberta.

### Standard Statement:

**Manipulation of the spinal column is within the scope of physiotherapy practice. Physiotherapists who practice spinal manipulation understand the role of manipulation as a component of patient care and understand the risks associated with it. They are autonomous practitioners who work within their personal level of competence and meet jurisdictional requirements.**

### Legislative Authority

Section 2(r)(v) states that "physiotherapy" or "physical therapy" means the application of professional physiotherapy knowledge, skills and judgement by a physiotherapist to obtain, regain or maintain optimal health and functional performance and includes, but is not limited to, spinal and peripheral joint manipulation.

### Informed Consent

Informed client consent specific to spinal manipulation is required.

### Resources:

College of Physiotherapists of Alberta, 2008. [Spinal Manipulation Competency Profile](#)  
NS College of Physiotherapists Standard on [Informed Consent](#)

### Definitions:

**Spinal Manipulation:** "A skilful passive movement of a spinal joint beyond its active limit of motion but within the limit of its anatomical Integrity. It is a localized high velocity, low amplitude (HVLA) thrust technique. Its purpose is to restore motion and function."

**Risk:** Risks and side effects are: (a) those which are probable or likely to occur; (b) those which are possible rather than probable but can have serious consequences; or (c) anything else which would be considered relevant to know by a reasonable person in the same circumstance."

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<sup>1</sup> The terms physical therapist, physiotherapist, physiotherapy, physiotherapy, physiothérapie, physiothérapeute, PT and pht are official marks used with permission. The terms physical therapist and physical therapy are synonyms for physiotherapist