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Record Status
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Citation

Authors' objectives
Part I: The goal of occupational therapy (OT) is to enable people to successfully participate in the activities of everyday life. This is achieved either by enabling people to enhance their ability to live meaningful lives or by modifying the environment to better support participation. For outpatient care, occupational therapy is usually described by a general practitioner. The aim of part I is to give an overview of the current situation of occupational therapy in Austria, encompassing the following information: definition of occupational therapy, differentiation to other therapeutic services, how the curriculum is organised, number of occupational therapists. Part II: Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic, systemic inflammatory disorder of the connective tissue that mainly affects flexible (synovial) joints. About 0.6% of the Austrian population is affected by RA. Treatment of RA is complex and includes pharmacological, physical, occupational, orthopaedic and psychological therapy. Occupational therapy interventions may encompass instruction in the use of assistive devices, provision of splints, instruction on joint protection or training of activities. Part II of the project aims to assess the evidence concerning the efficacy of occupational therapy for rheumatoid arthritis.

Authors' conclusions
Part I: To describe the real demand of occupational therapy measures (and therapists), sufficient administrative data, epidemiological data, and evidence-based analyses of the effectiveness of occupational therapy are required Part II: There is strong to limited evidence for the effectiveness of occupational therapy on the outcomes of functional ability, pain, and grip strength. There is a lack of evidence concerning other outcomes and categories of occupational measures.

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