The prevalence of cardiovascular disease in the patients receiving outpatient physical therapy services continues to rise. Higher risk populations in increasingly more autonomous practice settings creates the demand for physical therapists to more closely monitor overall health status of patients. Measuring vital signs allows therapists to screen for medical ‘red flags’, incorporate relevant information into the plan of care, and monitor a patient’s cardiovascular response to physical therapy interventions. Currently, very few studies have examined physical therapists’ engagement in the regular monitoring of vital signs. This study was designed to examine the beliefs of physical therapists about the importance of measuring vital signs, why they do or do not measure, and their perceived barriers to measuring. The study was completed in the State of Florida with 318 respondents. The survey results revealed 62% of the respondents believed it was important to measure the vital signs of patients with known cardiovascular disease. The evidence suggests that the majority of participants did not routinely measure HR, BP, SpO2 of the patients in their current caseload. The results of this study also highlighted the discrepancies between therapists’ beliefs about what is considered important in clinical practice and what is actually occurring in practice. Although many participants’ believe that it is extremely important to measure the vital signs of patients with known cardiovascular disease, only a small portion are actually routinely taking these measures. Future research is needed to continue to examine the monitoring of vital signs of patients receiving physical therapy outpatient services. Data collection nationally would broaden the understanding of practice and strengthen the conclusions that can be made. Physical therapists are ultimately responsible for ensuring the safety of each patient in the clinical setting. Measuring vital signs allows clinicians to screen for undiagnosed conditions, monitor existing conditions, and facilitate safety through prevention of negative events.

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