

Curriculum Vitae

Personal Information

Emily Scherb, PT, DPT

Emily@thecircusdoc.com
www.puremotionphysicaltherapy.com
www.thecircusdoc.com

Education

Washington University in St. Louis

St. Louis, MO

- 2001 – 2005
- A.B. Physical Anthropology
- Minor Modern Dance

Washington University Program in Physical Therapy

St. Louis, MO

- 2006 – 2009
- Doctor of Physical Therapy

Licensure

Licensed Physical Therapist in Washington since 2009

Licensed Physical Therapist in Oregon since 2019

Employment History

Owner and Physical Therapist

Pure Motion Physical Therapy, PLLC

Seattle, WA

- 6/2013 – Present
- Physical therapist specializing in education and the care and treatment of circus artists
- Presenting education to circus artists, instructors, and physical therapists on the unique challenges and stresses on circus bodies as “The Circus Doc”
 - Presentation of research updates through monthly Circus Smart Speaker Series
 - Online courses and webinars for circus educators and healthcare providers

Company Physical Therapist

Acrobatic Conundrum

Seattle, WA

- 2016 – Present
- Available for consult while the company is on tour and for in person care of performers when they are in Seattle.

Fellowship Regional Mentor

Washington University Program in Physical Therapy

- 8/2015 – 2021
- Mentor for Movement System Clinical Fellowship teaching others to effectively diagnose and treat movement impairment syndromes

Resident Physical Therapist

School of Acrobatics and New Circus Arts(SANCA)

Seattle, WA

- 6/2013 – Present

- Lecturer for the Pre- Professional Program and staff training
- Physical therapist for staff and student needs

Circus Arts Instructor; acrobatics, aerial, and flying trapeze

- 5/1998 – 2018
- Various locations including SANCA(2009- 2018), Trapeze School New York(multiple locations 2003-8), Circus Center (San Francisco 2007), Circus Harmony (St. Louis 2002-3), Sports and Arts Center at Island Lake (1998 - 2001)

Physical Therapist	Active Physical Therapy	Seattle, WA
• 1/2011 – 5/2013		

Physical Therapist	Action Reaction Physical Therapy	Seattle, WA
• 7/2009 – 12/2011		

Flying Trapeze School Manager	Trapeze School New York	New York, NY
• 8/2005 – 7/2006		
• Management of staff education, scheduling, and inventory		

Publications

Winder B, Heineman H, Scherb E. Prevalence and impact of urinary incontinence and other pelvic floor symptoms in female aerialists. *J Womens Pelvic Health Phys Ther.* 2025;49(1):35-44.
doi:10.1097/JWH.0000000000000326

Scherb E, Heineman H, Muci D. Circus 101: Features and Feats of Circus Bodies. In: *Clinical Management of Circus Arts.* Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy. 2022

Scherb E, Heineman H. Aerial Athletes: Flying, Hanging, Wrapping, Catching. In: *Clinical Management of Circus Arts.* Academy of Orthopaedic Physical Therapy. 2022

Scherb E. Low Back Pain in Circus Artists: Using a Movement System Impairment Framework as a Component of Care. *Orthopaedic Physical Therapy Practice* 34.3 (2022): 148-151.

Scherb E. *Applied anatomy of aerial arts: an illustrated guide to strength, flexibility, training, and injury prevention.* North Atlantic Books, 2018.

Lectures and Workshops

Circus Fusion

- Various dates March 2021 – present
- Online continuing education course for healthcare providers who are looking to learn more about working with circus artists

Instructor Boost

- Various dates June 2021 – present
- Continuing education for experienced circus instructors on the biomechanical background of circus movements and musculoskeletal health in circus

Evaluation and Treatment of Circus Artists: The Hanging Athlete

- Various Dates 4/2017 – Present
- Locations including; Boston, MA, Portland, OR, Los Angeles, CA, Charlotte, NC, New York, NY
- Continuing education course for Physical Therapist continuing education on assessment, common injuries and treatment of circus artists

Soaring Safely: Concussion Recovery for Circus and Flying Trapeze Artists

PAMA International Symposium

Washington, D.C.

- July 2025
- Presented with Dr. Liz Corwin
- Workshop with discussion of the unique challenges of returning circus artists to flying trapeze and actionable steps to help them get back to their profession or sport

Rehabilitation Exercises to Prepare an Aerialist for Return to Training

PAMA International Symposium

London, U.K.

- July 2024
- Presented with Dr. Lynnette Khoo-Summers and Pooja Verma
- Workshop dedicated to a lab exploration and practice of exercises for aerial return to sport

Shoulder Movement Analysis, Diagnosis, and Treatment Across Sports: In Water, Through Air, and Against Gravity

Combined Sections Meeting of the APTA

Boston, MA

- February 2024
- Presented with Drs. Renee Ivens, Robert Ohashi, Ann Crowe with additional materials by Shirley Sahrman
- Lecture outlining a common shoulder movement diagnosis and what treatment looks like in a swimming, tennis, and circus population which all utilize the shoulder overhead

Concussion Guidelines Update

American Circus Educators Conference

Virtual

- November 2023
- Presented with Dr. Liz Corwin
- Updating the circus educator community on best practices with regard to concussion management and common course of treatment for those who are injured.

Does Circus Have to Hurt?

American Youth Circus Organization

Seattle, WA

- August 2023
- Presented with Dr. Sydney Schack-Farnell
- Presenting pain science lecture/workshop to pre-professional circus artists and circus instructors

Straight Arm Hanging Analysis and Corrective Exercises for Aerial Artist's Shoulders

PAMA International Symposium

New York, NY

- July 2023
- Lecture/Workshop on the specific demands on the shoulder in aerial artists

- The Performing Arts Medical Association (PAMA) consists of medical professionals who are invested in furthering the knowledge surrounding the care of performing artists

Prevalence of Urinary Incontinence and Other Pelvic Floor-related Symptoms in Circus Artists

PAMA International Symposium

New York, NY

- July 2023
- Presented with Drs. Brooke Winder and Heather Heineman
- Based on novel research conducted by the presenters

Evaluation and Treatment of the Shoulder Girdle of Aerial Artists from a Movement Systems Perspective

Presented at the Combined Sections Meeting of the APTA

Denver, CO

- February 2020
- Presented with Dr. Lynnette Khoo-Summers
- Lecture on the specific demands on the shoulder in aerial artists

Hanging Analysis of Aerial Artists

IADMS

Montreal, Quebec

- October 2019
- Presented with Dr. Lynnette Khoo-Summers
- Lecture/Workshop on the specific demands on the shoulder in aerial artists
- International Association of Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS) consists of medical and dance professionals who are invested in furthering the knowledge surrounding the care of performing artists

Evaluation of Aerial Artists

PAMA Symposium

Orange, CA

- June 2018
- Lecture/Workshop on the specific demands on the shoulder in aerial artists
- The Performing Arts Medical Association (PAMA) consists of medical professionals who are invested in furthering the knowledge surrounding the care of performing artists

Circus Anatomy and Injury Prevention Workshops

- 2014 – Present
- Various circus schools around the country including Fly Circus Space (New Orleans 2/2018), Esh Circus Arts (Boston 4/2017), Cirque School LA (Los Angeles 8/2016) SANCA (Seattle 3-4 x annually), Versatile Arts (Seattle annually), Bumbershoot (St. Louis 10/2015, 11/2017), Aloft (Chicago 9/2014)

Teacher Training Aerial Anatomy and Biomechanics

Versatile Arts

Seattle, WA

- Annually 2017 - 2023
- Anatomy and biomechanics of aerial artists with common movement faults presented to instructors and instructors in training at Versatile Arts

Perform Forever: From Hanging to Handstands

Seattle, WA and Atlanta, GA

- 12/2016 – Seattle 7/2017 Atlanta, GA
- A full day workshop for aerial artists, circus instructors, and hanging athletes that focused on education to enable safe sustainable training and injury prevention

Teaching Circus with the Body in Mind American Circus Educators Conference San Francisco, CA

- October 2016
- Presentation for top circus instructors from around the United States on recognizing common postural alignments, injuries, and movement faults with education on how to improve the language and cues used to improve teaching methods

Circus Anatomy Circus Now at Chicago Contemporary Circus Festival Chicago, IL

- 3/2013
- Anatomy lecture for professional and pre-professional circus performers and circus instructors

Functional Circus Anatomy American Circus Educators Conference Seattle, WA

- 9/2012
- Day long functional anatomy workshop for circus educators during a national conference

Membership and Volunteer Work

Journal of Performing Arts Medicine

- Editorial Board starting April 2026

Seattle Dance and Performing Arts Medicine

- 2010 – Present
- Board Member 2019 – present

Performing Arts Medicine Association

- 2013 – present
- Co-chair PAMA 43rd International Symposium at Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg Center 2025

American Youth Circus Organization / American Circus Educators

- 2012 – Present
- Board Member 2022 – 2025

International Association of Dance Medicine and Science

- Member 2012 – present
-

American Physical Therapy Association

- Orthopedic Section
 - Performing Arts Special Interest Group
- Sports Section

Awards

Washington University in St. Louis School of Physical Therapy 2020 Alumni Achievement Award