

Greenwich Hospital

What is Stroke Rehabilitation?

PATIENT/FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

What is stroke rehabilitation?

Stroke rehabilitation helps you to build your strength and confidence in order to be as independent as possible. For some stroke survivors, this may mean changing or relearning how to carry out your activities of daily living. Stroke rehabilitation may not reverse the effects of a stroke, but it does help you to improve your daily functioning.

What are the goals of stroke rehabilitation?

- Improve physical functioning
- Increase your independence
- Help you to maintain a satisfying quality of life after your stroke
- Provide you with education to help prevent another stroke

Who makes up the stroke team?

Stroke rehabilitation includes a multi-disciplinary team:

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| • The patient | • Speech-language pathologist |
| • The family/caregiver | • Occupational therapist |
| • The doctor & nurses on the stroke team | • Social worker/case manager |
| • Physical therapist | • Other health care provider as needed |

You and your family member/caregiver are a very important part of the stroke team. You must be willing to take an active part in the rehabilitation process to achieve your maximum functioning potential.

Your family member/caregiver will be an important support through your rehabilitation process. Family members need to know how the stroke affects you as a patient and how to provide additional support once home.

When does stroke rehabilitation begin?

Rehabilitation should begin early in the recovery process to restore function and minimize impairment. This will also help to prevent secondary problems such as stiff joints, falls, and skin breakdown which can occur from immobility.

You will receive rehabilitation from the stroke team while in the hospital. Depending upon your individual needs, you may need short term rehabilitation in an extended care facility before going home. Once home, some patients may continue with rehabilitation therapy through a visiting nurse agency or at an outpatient setting. Your case worker/social worker will assist you in discharge planning arrangements.

What will I do in rehabilitation?

Your rehabilitation plan is individualized depending upon your needs and the severity of the stroke. You may require rehabilitation with:

- Activities of daily living, such as bathing, grooming, dressing, feeding
- Physical activity skills such as transferring, walking, and/or using a device such as a cane, walker, or wheelchair
- Speech and language skills to improve communication
- Socialization skills to relearn how to interact with other people
- Cognitive skills for memory and/or problem-solving
- Psychological support to gain coping skills and treatment to overcome depression if needed.

How do I find out more information about strokes and rehabilitation?

For more information, you can speak with your stroke team doctor, nurse, and/or therapist. Additional resources include:

- The American Stroke Association @ www.strokeassociation.org
- The American Heart Association @ www.americanheart.org

Sources: American Heart Association @ www.americanheart.org
American Stroke Association @ www.strokeassociation.org
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*For more Patient Fact Sheets, see the Greenwich Hospital web site at
www.greenhosp.org and Click on Patients & Visitors, then Patient Education*