

What is a typical course of treatment during a short-term rehab stay?

Each short-term rehabilitation program and length of stay will vary from patient-to-patient. Some may be as short as 11 to 14 days, others as long as three weeks or more. The following example reflects what may be considered a “typical” three-week treatment pathway for a patient recovering from orthopedic surgery.

WEEK 1:

- Evaluations – Physical and occupational therapy and social work
- Precautionary instruction
- Exercise instruction - Supine and sitting
- Transfer training
- Gait and balance training
- Grooming and hygiene
- Dressing training, including adaptive equipment instruction
- Patient and family education

WEEK 2:

- Continued precautionary instruction
- Exercise instruction – Supine, sitting and standing
- Transfer training – Bed and chair toilet
- Gait and balance training
- Home assessment
- Patient and family education – Grooming, hygiene, bathing
- Dressing training

WEEK 3:

- Exercise instruction – Sitting and standing
- Transfer training – Bed, chair toilet, tub and shower, car
- Gait and balance training on a level surface
- Grooming, hygiene, bathing training
- Dressing training
- Home assessment
- Patient and family education

Who pays for post-hospital care?

Since post-hospital care is ordinarily prescribed by a physician, services are usually covered by major funding sources, including Medicare, Medicaid, Worker’s Compensation, automobile no-fault plans, private health insurance, HMOs and other managed care plans. Of course, patients without insurance coverage can pay for their care from private funds. It is very important to check with each facility you may be considering to ensure that your particular insurance will cover your stay. The discharge planner or social worker at the acute care hospital can also help determine your post-hospital care benefits.



What steps should patients take if their doctor recommends post-hospital care?

Before you make your decision, be sure to do your homework. Make a list of available skilled nursing facilities in your area and compare and contrast their capabilities and qualifications. Do their skilled nursing services meet your specific needs? What is their reputation in the community? Will your insurance cover your stay? Is the facility located near your personal physician? Is it close to the support of family and friends? Ask your doctor or hospital discharge planner for recommendations.



Remember, when it comes to your health, an informed choice is a smart choice.

A Patient's Guide to

Post-Hospital Care



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A Patient's Guide to Post-Hospital Care

Not too long ago, people recovering from surgery, accidents or illness remained in the hospital until they were well enough to go home. Today, that pattern has changed. Patients whose conditions have stabilized but still require further rehabilitation or clinical services generally must turn to specialized programs and settings to achieve maximum recovery.

If you or a family member require post-hospital care, where will you turn? What setting is most appropriate? What levels of care and types of services are available? In this pamphlet, you will find answers to these and other questions designed to help you understand and select the post-hospital care option that's right for you...the fastest, safest, most efficient means of bridging the gap between hospital and home or alternate level of care.



What is post-hospital care?

Post-hospital care, also referred to as short-term rehabilitation or sub-acute care, is an intensive level of care one step down from the acute care provided by a hospital. Care is provided on an inpatient basis immediately after hospitalization. Its ultimate goal is to help patients heal, both physically and emotionally, in a therapeutic environment, until they are well enough to be discharged to a lower level of care or, preferably, to their homes.

What are the settings for post-hospital care?

The great majority of post-hospital patients receive care in specially designed wings or units of skilled nursing facilities. Nursing facilities are ideal sites, since they already have the capabilities, staff and expertise needed to handle a wide range of health care needs. It is important to keep in mind, however, that post-hospital patients are not nursing home residents. Although they may be housed within the same building, post-hospital short-term rehabilitation patients receive a specialized level of care in a dedicated setting. Other venues where sub-acute care and short-term rehabilitation are offered include freestanding facilities and specialty units within certain hospitals.

What conditions qualify for post-hospital care?

Anyone who requires 24-hour/7-day-a-week supervised care, but whose medical condition is stable, may be eligible for post-hospital care. Most short-term rehabilitation facilities require a physician referral for a patient to be admitted. Some of the conditions that qualify for this level of care include –

- Orthopedic trauma, such as broken hips or complex fractures
- Joint replacement for hip or knee
- Post-surgical recovery
- Head and spinal cord injuries
- Neuromuscular disorders
- Slow healing wounds
- Motor vehicle and other traumatic accidents
- Stroke or heart attack
- Conditions requiring life-support technology, such as ventilator therapy
- Chronic or progressive illnesses, cancer, heart disease, renal failure and diabetes complications

What services are typically provided?

The most comprehensive skilled nursing care facilities provide services for patients at virtually every stage of the recovery process, employing a highly trained team of professional caregivers and support staff. Customized rehabilitation plans are designed for each patient based on his or her individual needs and diagnosis. Services may include, but are not limited to –

- Skilled nursing
- Physical and occupational therapy
- Speech and language pathology
- Therapy for swallowing disorders
- Gait and balance training
- Cognitive strategies
- Intravenous therapy
- Enteral nutrition
- Respiratory therapy
- Wound care
- Pain management



How long will post-hospital care continue?



Patients generally remain in treatment until their doctor determines that they are well enough to be discharged, preferably to their homes or assisted living residence. Once a patient returns home, he or she may continue to receive care through home care services or the services of the post-hospital/sub-acute facility on an outpatient basis.

