



Care Instructions

Fremont - Hayward - Union city

Stroke Rehabilitation: After Your Visit

Your Kaiser Permanente Care Instructions

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Stroke rehabilitation is training and therapy to help you learn to do everyday things you can no longer do since your stroke. The focus will depend on how the stroke has affected your ability to do the things you want and need to do.

Rehab begins in the hospital, as soon as possible after the stroke. You will have a team of doctors, nurses, and therapists to help you relearn daily activities, such as eating, bathing, and dressing. You may also need help to learn how to walk or talk again. If the stroke damaged your memory, you will learn ways to improve it. You will recover faster if you begin rehab soon after the stroke and do a little every day. Most rehab programs offer at least 3 hours of therapy a day, 5 or 6 days a week. But even with rehabilitation, you may not be able to do everything you could before the stroke.

You will need medicines to prevent another stroke. Your doctor may prescribe other medicines to lower high blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and manage pain, sleep problems, or depression.

Follow-up care is a key part of your treatment and safety. Be sure to make and go to all appointments, and call your doctor if you are having problems. It's also a good idea to know your test results and keep a list of the medicines you take.

How can you care for yourself at home?

If you have problems swallowing after a stroke:

- Eat foods that smell good. This can increase the amount of saliva and help you swallow.
- Avoid sticky foods such as peanut butter, syrup, and bananas.
- Avoid dry foods such as crackers, rice, popcorn, and toast.

To prevent choking:

- Eat small bites of food. Place food on the unaffected side of your mouth.
- Eat soft foods or finely chopped solid foods. Juice or soup may be added to solid food.

Allow about 30 to 40 minutes to eat, so you will not feel rushed. Also, sit up for 45 to 60 minutes after you finish eating.

Fill your glass three-quarters full so that you do not have to tilt your head back very far.

Have someone clean up any clutter in your house so you do not trip over it. Make sure your rooms are well lit.

Put Velcro, elastic, and snaps on clothes to make them easier to get on and off. It may also help to sit down while you get dressed.

Put safety features, such as rails and nonskid tape, in the bathroom and other rooms.

Use a cane or walker to help you get around.

Do not sit or lie down in the same position for a long time.

Check your skin every day for pressure sores.

Wear disposable pads if you have problems with bladder control.

When should you call for help?

Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You have signs of a stroke. These may include:
- Sudden numbness, paralysis, or weakness in your face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of your body.
- New problems with walking or balance.
- Sudden vision changes.
- Drooling or slurred speech.
- New problems speaking or understanding simple statements, or feeling confused.
- A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches.
- You have problems that rehab is not helping.

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You are depressed about your rehab progress. Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:
- You do not get better as expected.

Where can you learn more?

Go to <http://www.KP.org> and enter the term A614 in the search box to learn more about “Stroke Rehabilitation: After Your Visit”.

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