

Essential Home Equipment for Adapting after Stroke

When someone who has had a stroke returns home, the home environment can impact their recovery. It is important for your home environment to support your continuing recovery and safety. This information below will help you and your family learn about equipment that can be used to adapt your home after a stroke.

How do I know if my home is safe?

An occupational therapist may perform an in-home evaluation if it is necessary. This means the occupational therapist will make recommendations for equipment and changes to your home based on your particular skills, needs, and goals. Your family may be asked to provide measurements and/or pictures of your home. The therapist will then use this information to recreate your home setting in the clinic setting. This will allow you to practice activities you will perform in your home setting while in treatment sessions.

How do I improve access to my home?

Your treatment team may recommend the use of a ramp to create a safer entry and exit for your home. There are many things to consider with ramps:

- Ramps can be permanent or temporary.
- Ramps can be purchased or rented.
- Ramps can be built in different styles and materials.
 - Link for building a wheelchair ramp:
<https://www.lowes.com/projects/build-and-remodel/build-a-wheelchair-ramp/project>
- Your neighborhood may have building requirements or may require a building permit for construction.

- The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) provides specifications, requirements and guidelines for building a ramp. They can be found at this link: <https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/buildings-and-sites/about-the-ada-standards/background/adaag>

What are the best bathroom assistance devices?

Your occupational therapist may recommend a raised toilet seat, commode chair, toilet safety rails or another piece of equipment for safety and independence when using the toilet. If certain criteria are met, insurance may cover the cost of toileting equipment. Ask your occupational therapist or social worker for more information.

Assistive devices can help you enjoy bathing independently. Your bathtub or shower may require:

- Tub transfer bench
- Shower seat
- Hand-held shower head
- Grab bars or tub rails
- Nonslip treads (to prevent slips and falls when standing)

These items can be purchased from:

- Local medical supply stores
- Online websites that ship to your home
- Your occupational therapist and/or discharge planner
- Local medical loan closet (your social worker can help you to locate and obtain contact information)

What are the best bedroom assistance devices?

It is important to consider the height of your bed and your ability to get into the bed. Your therapist may recommend adjusting the height of your bed to create a level transfer surface. You may need bed rails to turn by yourself and for general safety. Your therapist may also recommend using a bedside

commode or urinal at night. These devices help prevent accidents and decrease your risk of falling if you have a frequent need to urinate.

What are the best self-care tools?

Your occupational therapist may provide education and training on other tools to make sure you can perform activities of daily living (ADLs) safely. These include but are not limited to: a reacher, sock aide, long-handled shoe horn, long-handled sponge, bath mitt, self-wipe toilet aid for hygiene, adaptive kitchen utensils, and a button hook or zipper pull.

What are the best mobility aids?

Your physical therapist can educate you further on appropriate devices for mobility including wheelchair, walkers, canes and scooter.

Equipment Recommended by Therapist:

| Equipment | Where to Purchase | Next Steps |
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Notes:

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