Maine CITE

Assistive Technology for all ages and all abilities

Durable Medical Equipment Glossary

Introduction

This Durable Medical Equipment Glossary is intended to be educational guide that lists and describes common medical equipment available to the public.

In the following pages, a variety of devices are listed with general information about each, including a brief description of its function; general weight capacities; common differences among models; a sample of brands that make the device; price ranges; available accessories; sizing practices; and safety tips. Each entry may not match brand specifications entirely or detail all possible variations and information among devices available on the market.

Here are a few points to consider

- Always follow the recommended weight capacity listed by a device's manufacturer.
- Device dimensions can vary broadly. Dimensions included in this guide are meant as rough estimates.
- Prices fluctuate often and can be different between purchasing options.
- The brand lists are not comprehensive.

Safety and sizing tips offered in this glossary are meant for general information. These tips are comprehensive for all individuals. Please consult your doctor and therapy team for individual instruction. Contact Maine CITE with any questions, feedback, donation offers, and equipment requests; info@mainecite.org or 207-621-3195.

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Assisted Ambulation

Cane

Canes aid individuals with pain, weakness, and balance impairments to walk safely and comfortably, along with decreasing their chance of falling. Individuals with arthritis in the knees and hips on one side, mild balance problems, or injuries to one foot or leg might consider getting a cane if they can still support most of their weight independently.



Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 500 lbs.

Common Differences

- Single-point canes end in a single tip that contacts the ground when in use.
- Quad canes have four points that contact the ground and offer a broader base of support.

Brands

- Drive
- HurryCane
- Invacare
- Carex
- Vive Health
- Medline

Price Range

- $13 to $40.

Accessories

- Different tip and grip styles
- Ice cane pick
- Brackets to hang the cane on a table or chair when not in use

Sizing

- Wearing normal shoes while standing with arms hanging loosely at your sides, have someone else measure the length from your wrist to the floor.
- Adjust the cane so that the tip of it is that distance away from the floor.
- If the length is correct, you will notice a 20-degree to 30-degree bend in the elbow when your hand is on the cane.

Safety

- Use the cane on the opposite side of your injury, pain, or weakness (unless otherwise specified by your healthcare team)
- Move the cane and weaker leg a comfortable distance forward.
- With your weight supported on both your cane and your bad leg, step through with your unaffected leg.
- Place your cane firmly on the ground before you take a step.
- Do not place your cane too far ahead of you, or it could slip from under you.

Crutches

Crutches are used when it is too painful to put weight on one foot or leg due to an injury or when a leg or foot is recovering from an injury and use must be avoided during the healing process.



Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 500 lbs.

Common Differences

The three major differences in crutches are underarm, forearm, and platform crutches.

1. Underarm crutches are most common and support the user by putting pressure through the hands and shoulders to take body weight off of the leg.
2. Forearm crutches are designed for longer-term use as they eliminate the pressure under the armpit.

3. Platform crutches are designed with a wide flat surface at the top that allows the user to place their arm through the crutch rather than gripping it with their hand. These crutches are used for individuals who are partially weight-bearing and are particularly helpful for individuals with rheumatoid conditions.

Brands

- Drive
- Bodymed
- Cardinal Health

Price Ranges

- $17 to $60.

Accessories

- Different tip and grip styles
- Ice cane pick
- Bags
- Brackets to hang the cane on a table or chair when not in use

Sizing

- When standing with arms loosely at the sides, each crutch should be two finger widths below the armpit.
- Adjust the handgrip to allow for a slight bend at the elbow.

Safety

- Make sure there are no loose screws or loose wooden parts.
- Use with firm footwear
- Beware of slippery and wet surfaces and be careful on stairs.
- Don’t leave the injured leg hanging down for any length of time as this can cause it to swell.
- When using crutches, most of one’s weight should be supported through the arms, not the armpits.
- To change direction, hop around. Do not twist your foot.

Basic Walker (No Wheels)

Basic walkers have no wheels and are best used to travel short distances or if stability is the main concern for the user. Individuals who tend to fall forward will benefit the most from this walker due to the stability in the front. This walker is also foldable and lightweight, making it very easy to travel with.

Weight Capacity



- Standard: Up to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 700 lbs.

Brands

- Drive Medical
- Carex
- Medline
- Stander

Common Differences

- Handle styles
- Telescoping legs
- Folding mechanism

Price Range

- $30 to $60 (more for bariatric models).
- If the item is being used for short-term use, it might be beneficial to explore second-hand options such as lone closest or reuse programs.

Accessories

- Baskets
- Various caps to go on the legs (Example tennis ball or ski)
- Different handle grips.

Sizing

- The walker height should be level with the bend in your wrists with your arms resting at your side.
- There should be a slight bend in your elbows (about 20º to 30º) when holding onto the walker.

Safety

- Ensure all push pins are fully engaged and unrestricted.
- Walkers are not recommended for use on stairs.
- Do not try to carry anything in your hands when using a walker. It is recommended to get a basket or bag to attach to the walker.
- Do not try to hold on to the walker when you stand up. It may tip over on you. Instead, push up from the surface you are sitting on.
- Do not lunge with a walker.
- Never run with a walker
- Never carry a walker off the ground while walking.
- Keep the walker wheels to the outside of the walker. This will reduce trip hazards.
- Remove throw rugs from common areas.

Front Wheeled Walker (Two Wheels)

Front-wheeled walkers have wheels in the front, which makes them easier to push. The user can still put their weight in the walker while moving forward and the rubber tips in the back will prevent the walker from rolling. This walker is also foldable and lightweight, making it very easy to travel with.



Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 700 lbs.

Brands

- Drive Medical
- Carex

- Medline

Common Differences

- Handle styles
- Telescoping legs
- Folding mechanism

Price Range

- Prices of new walkers can range from $30 to $60 (more for bariatric models). Prices range due to where the item is purchased.
- If the item is being used for short-term use, it might be beneficial to explore second-hand options such as lone closest or reuse programs.

Accessories

- Baskets
- Various caps to go on the legs (Example tennis ball)
- Different handle grips.

Sizing

- Stand up straight with your arms resting at your side.
- The walker height should be level with the bend in your wrists. Note There should be a slight bend in your elbows (about 20º -30º) when holding onto the walker.

Safety

- Ensure that all push pins are fully engaged and unrestricted.
- Walkers are not recommended for use on stairs.
- Do not try to carry anything in your hands when using a walker. It is recommended to get a basket or bag to attach to the walker.
- Do not try to hold on to the walker when you stand up. It may tip over on you. Instead, push up from the surface you are sitting on.
- Do not lunge with a walker.
- Never run with a walker

- Never carry a walker and walk. A walker is used to assist with balance.
- Keep the walker wheels to the outside of the walker. This will reduce trip hazards.
- Remove throw rugs from areas to be walked upon.

Hemi-Walker

This walker is primarily used for individuals who would benefit from the support of a regular walker but who are unable to hold it with both hands. Often this is due to full or partial paralysis on one side of the body (hemiplegia) but can also be the result of a broken bone in the wrist, arm, or collarbone.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 700 lbs.



Brands

- Accessibility Medical Equipment
- Drive
- Medline
- Invacare

Price Range

- $20 to $80

Accessories

- Baskets
- Various caps to go on the legs
- Different handle grips.

Safety

- Wearing your usual walking shoes, stand with the hemi-walker placed on your strong side, or opposite the injured side.

- The hemi-walker height should be adjusted so that the top hand grip is in line with the crease in the middle of your wrist. To adjust the legs to the correct height, press push buttons on each leg and slide into the desired height position before locking into place.
- Ensure all legs are adjusted so that the hemi walker sits level before use.
- Ensure all locking mechanisms and push buttons are fully engaged.
- Ensure hand grips are securely attached and do not slip.
- Check tips for wear or damage. If these issues develop, discontinue use until replaced.
- Ensure the hemi walker is placed far enough to the side that there is enough clearance for movement.
- Do not use stairs and escalators with a hemi walker unless your healthcare provider has provided training.
- Watch out for potential safety hazards including, but not limited to, slippery, uneven, or soft surfaces and objects in your path.

Rollators

Rollators have a similar frame to standard walkers but have four wheels and hand-operated brakes that can be engaged by the user. They are ideal for individuals who require some balance support and who are unable to walk long distances. The front wheels swivel to make turning smoother, and due to the wheels being larger than the standard front-wheeled walker, these devices are more convenient to use outdoors and over rough or uneven terrain.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 300 Lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 500 Lbs.



Common Differences

1. **Three-wheeled rollators** have one swiveling wheel in the front, allowing for a tighter turning radius and therefore most convenient for tighter spaces or indoor use. They do not have a seat though and do not provide as much stability and support as a four-wheeled walker, making them unappealing for those who benefit from these features.
2. **Four-wheeled rollators** have two swiveling wheels in the front and two fixed wheels in the back. Most come with a seat and provide more support and stability than a three-wheeled rollator. Due to having four wheels, these devices do not have as tight of a turning radius, potentially making them challenging to use in tight spaces.
3. **Heavy-duty rollators**, also known as bariatric rollators, have a higher weight capacity than standard rollators. The seat on them is usually about 19-inches as opposed to the standard 15-inch on the standard model rollator. These rollators have reinforced steel frames and can support an individual who is between 400 lbs. and 500 lbs.
4. **Upright rollators** also have four wheels for stability. However, the handles of these walkers are positioned higher than the rollator to allow the forearm to take pressure off the user's hands and wrists. Due to its height, an upright rollator will benefit the user's posture more, as it keeps them in a more upright position during use.
5. **One-arm rollators** are also an option for individuals who only have the use of one arm but still need added stability. This option features one break bar in the middle instead of two separate hand breaks.

Brands

- Drive
- Invacare
- Medline
- Acre
- Avanti
- Kmina
- Allivibrant
- Helavo

- Nova

Price Range

- Prices of new rollators can range from $100 to more than $1,000.

Accessories

- Storage baskets, pouches, basket organizers
- Cane or cup holders
- Lights
- Seat cushions

Sizing

When sizing a rollator properly there are three main measurements that should be taken

1. Seat-to-floor height
    a. While the user is standing, measure the height from the floor to the crease in the back of their knee. This measurement will indicate the height required for the rollator seat.
    b. When adjusting your rollator, the first adjustment to make is the seat height. Once this has been adjusted properly, adjust the handles to suit your needs.
2. Handle height
    a. The distance between the floor and the center of a user's wrist with their arms at their sides will indicate the height required for the rollator handles.
3. Seat width
    a. Measure the hip with of the user to ensure that the seat is wide enough.

Safety

- Before sitting down or standing up from a rollator seat, always check that the parking brakes are on to avoid falls or injury.
- Unless specifically designed as a dual rollator and transport chair, never push or pull a rollator while the user is seated.

- Rollator users must be able to operate brakes safely. Rollators are not recommended for patients who do not have the necessary strength or working memory to activate the brakes as necessary.

Knee Scooter

Knee scooters can be a good alternative to crutches for those with foot or ankle injuries who need to remain active throughout the day. These devices are meant primarily for outside use as they have a large turning radius and are challenging to maneuver in tight spaces.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 500 lbs.







Common Differences

- **Three-wheeled knee scooters**, while less common, can provide a nimbler mode of transportation. They normally have two front wheels and one back wheel. They are generally more compact since they have one less wheel but are less stable.
- **Four-wheeled knee scooter** models are the most common form of knee scooter. These have two front wheels and two back wheels.
- **All-terrain knee scooters** have bigger and wider wheels that allow riders to go across rough terrain like grass, mud, or pebbles. If you have an active lifestyle, an all-terrain knee walker with bigger wheels may be ideal.

- **Bariatric knee scooters** are designed to handle increased weight capacities, are built from very robust materials. These heavy-duty knee scooters might also have a bigger support surface, such as broader handles and a larger knee pad.
- Before purchasing any knee scooter, ensure the weight capacity fulfills your requirements.

Brands

- ELENKER
- Vive Health
- KneeRover

Price Range

- $80 to $300.

Accessories

- Baskets
- Lights
- Bells
- A variety of knee pads
- Cup holders

Sizing

- Position the platform so it's closer to your healthy leg.
- Check the position of the platform by looking at the scooter from behind.
- Adjust the height of the platform to a comfortable position.
- Attach knee pads if necessary.
- Adjust the height of the handlebars.

Safety

- Wear a non-slip shoe on your non-injured foot.
- Do not use the walker to pull yourself up from a seated position.
- Check the clamps, pins, nuts, and bolts to make sure they are not loose or missing.
- Do not use on stairs or escalators.

- Take extra care when moving from one surface type to another (for example, from carpet to tile or from hardwood to a throw rug).
- Take extra care when changing surface levels (for example, from a curb to the street or ramp).
- Don't make sharp turns.
- Use the brake to control your speed while going downhill.
- Do not go over the manufacturer's suggested weight limitations (see the sticker on the equipment).

Knee Walker

The knee walker is a hands-free crutch substitute that allows the user to remain relatively active while eliminating the pressure on the upper body. This is a great product for an individual with a foot or ankle injury who needs to continue going to work throughout the healing process, especially if they are on their feet most of the day.



Weight Capacity

- 275 lbs.

Common Differences

- The iWalk 3.0 is the newest model, but the older iWalk 2.0 can also be found online. These models are very similar, but the iWalk 3.0 includes different sizing and adjustments for a better fit, along with a larger crutch foot on the bottom for added stability.

Price Range

- $150

Accessories

- The foot and tread can be changed to allow for more grip if needed.

Sizing

- The iWalk website (www.iwalk-free.com) includes a guide to help users size the device correctly.

Safety

- The iWalk website includes many safety tips to consider.
- Operating in an area that has smooth surfaces
- Taking the time to get used to using the device
- Ensuring that the straps are tightened properly

Wheelchairs

Manual Wheelchair

Manual wheelchairs are typically used by individuals who can propel themselves.

Dimensions



- Standard: 16-22” wide by 16-20” deep
- Bariatric: 26-34” wide by 18-22” deep

Chair Weight

- Lightweight: 33-35 lbs.
- Standard:35-40 lbs.
- Bariatric: 40-65 lbs.

Weight capacity



- Standard: Up to 250 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 1000 lbs.

Common Differences

Manual wheelchairs can be divided into two categories

1. Durable Medical Equipment (DME). DME is standard and has limited customizable features. This category is meant for short-term wheelchair users.
2. Complex Rehabilitation Technology (CRT). CRT is used by individuals needing a wheelchair for an extended amount of time and every feature is customizable to fit the user’s needs.

Brands

Many companies manufacture and sell manual wheelchairs. Depending on the type of chair, it can have very basic functions, or it can be customized to the user’s needs.

Price Range

- $150 to $1,500+
- The price can vary based on the customizations made to the chair and insurance coverage.

Accessories

- Cushions
- Seatbelts
- Brake variations/extensions
- Cupholders and trays
- Phone/tablet mounts

Sizing

- When buying a chair off the shelf, measure the user's hip width to determine the width of seat needed.
- To determine the seat depth, measure their knees to the back of the buttocks. Subtract two inches to avoid pressure from the front of the seat.
- Any postural abnormalities should be taken into consideration as well so the chair can best support the user's balance and ability to sit upright for extended amounts of time.
- CRT wheelchairs are often fitted by a seating specialist who will take the measurements of the user and account for any additional measurements or needs.

Safety

- The brakes are on when sitting in the chair and when preparing to transfer.
- A seatbelt should be worn if applicable.
- Footrests should be moved to the side or out of the way before transferring to avoid tripping.
- Keep pathways clear of throw rugs, clutter, and cords.
- Keep loose objects away from the wheels.
- Do not put heavy loads in the back of the chair.
- Never reach down to the floor or behind the chair to pick up an item. Use a reacher instead.

- Visit the Permobil Manual Wheelchair Guide (https//hub.permobil.com/manual-wheelchair-guide) for more information.

Transport Chair

A transport chair is a lightweight mobility aid that functions similarly to a wheelchair. However, instead of being pushed by the user, it is pushed by a caregiver because the rear wheels are smaller than a wheelchair and aren't meant to be propelled by hand. Transport chairs are only recommended for occasional or short-term use as they offer little support or comfort.

Weight Capacity



- Standard: 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 500 lbs.

Dimensions

- Narrow: 16 to 17" wide by 20" deep
- Medium: 18 to 20" wide by 22" deep
- Wide: 22+" wide by 24" deep
- Bariatric: 22+" wide x 18" deep

Chair Weight

- Ultra-lightweight: 15 lbs.
- Standard: 20 lbs.
- Bariatric: 53 lbs.

Brands

- Drive
- Medline
- Spin Life
- Invacare
- Walgreen's

Common Differences

- Wheel diameter

- Brakes
- Seating support

Pricing

- $50 to $300

Accessories

- Baskets
- Cupholders
- Trays
- Lap belts

Sizing

- When buying a chair off the shelf, measure the user's hip width to determine the width of seat needed.
- To determine the seat depth, measure their knees to the back of the buttocks. Subtract two inches to avoid pressure from the front of the seat.
- Any postural abnormalities should be taken into consideration as well so the chair can best support the user's balance and ability to sit upright for extended amounts of time.
- Due to transport chairs being meant for short-term use, the specific sizing is not as crucial as it is for chairs meant for long-term use.

Safety

- The brakes are on when sitting in the chair and when preparing to transfer.
- A seatbelt should be worn if applicable.
- Footrests should be moved to the side or out of the way before transferring to avoid tripping.
- Keep pathways clear of throw rugs, clutter, and cords.
- Keep loose objects away from the wheels.
- Do not put heavy loads in the back of the chair.
- Never reach down to the floor or behind the chair to pick up an item as the transport chair may tip over. Use a reacher instead.

Power-Operated Vehicle (Scooter)

Scooters are considered part of the Durable Medical Equipment (DME) category of power mobility because they are typically built for a wide range of consumers and have limited alteration and customization options.



An individual may benefit from a scooter if they:

- Have difficulty walking long distances.
- Have good trunk strength.
- Can transfer on/off the scooter.
- Can operate the tiller steering.
- Have the space to accommodate the scooter's large turning radius.

Dimensions

- Vary by make and model.

Chair Weight

- Lightweight for ease of transport and can be disassembled easily into individual components.
- 20 to 40 lbs.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: 200 to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: 400 to 600+ lbs.

Brands

- Drive
- Golden
- Prides

Price Range

- $400 to $4,000+

Accessories

- Additional baskets
- Cushions
- Overhead canopies
- Reflective flags

Sizing

- Although scooters come in standard sizes and have very few customizable features, it is best to find the correct average seat size for the user and adjust the seat and tiller height appropriately.
- Arm rests may have the ability to widen or narrow depending on the fit.

Safety

- The scooter is turned off before transferring in and out.
- A seatbelt should be worn if applicable.
- Keep pathways clear of throw rugs, clutter, and cords.
- Keep loose objects away from the wheels.
- Never reach down to the floor or behind the chair to pick up an item. Use a reacher instead.
- Approach terrain transitions (i.e. pavement to grass or road to sidewalk) head-on and not at an angle to reduce risk for tipping.
- Reduce speed indoors.

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) Power Wheelchair

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) organizes power wheelchairs into Groups. Group 1 and Group 2 are considered DME power wheelchairs.



Group 1 Power Wheelchairs

Group 1 Power Chairs should be considered by users if they:

- Will benefit from a narrower turning radius than a scooter or power-operated vehicle (POV) and can be used in the home.
- Have no postural abnormalities and are not at risk for pressure injury.

- Are appropriate for basic seating that provides no extra stability or skin protection and cannot be replaced with rehab seating.
- Require no power seat functions such as tilt or reclining.

Group 2 Power Wheelchair

Group 2 Power Wheelchair should be considered by users if they:

- Are unable to safely transfer, operate, and maintain postural stability in scooters.
- Live in a home that does not provide adequate access for operating a scooter's wider turning radius
- Can operate a power wheelchair safely or have a caregiver willing to operate who cannot push a manual wheelchair.
- Group 2 will improve the ability to participate in Mobility-Related Activities of Daily Living (MRADLs) in the home.
- Some Group 2 models have single and multi-power seating options available if they qualify for a tilt/recline system, or if they use a ventilator that is mounted on the wheelchair.
- Often the amount of tilt and/or recline that can be achieved with a Group 2 chair is not appropriate for clients dependent on these functions for pressure relief/pressure injury prevention.

Dimensions

- Standard: 16" to 20" wide by 16" to 20" deep
- Bariatric: 24" to 32" wide by 16" to 22" deep



Chair Weight

- Standard: 50-150 lbs.
- Bariatric: up to 260 lbs.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: Up to 700 lbs.

Brands

- Permobil
- Jazzy
- Quantum
- Pride

Price Range

- Insurance companies may cover some of the cost for qualifying individuals of these items.
- $2,000 to $8,000+.

Accessories

- Oxygen tank holders
- Baskets
- Trays
- Carts
- Cupholders

Sizing

Because these chairs are not meant for long-term use, it is best practice to find a chair that fits the user's basic needs. They should be able to reach the footplate to lift and set it down and be able to operate the joystick to steer the chair safely.

Safety

- The chair is turned off before transferring in and out.
- A seatbelt should be worn if applicable.
- Keep pathways clear of throw rugs, clutter, and cords.
- Keep loose objects away from the wheels.
- Never reach down to the floor or behind the chair to pick up an item. Use a reacher instead.
- Approach terrain transitions (i.e. pavement to grass or road to sidewalk) head-on and not at an angle to reduce risk for tipping.
- Reduce speed indoors.

- Visit the Permobil Power Wheelchair Guide (https//hub.permobil.com/power-wheelchair-guide) for more information.

Complex Rehab Technology (CRT) Power Wheelchair

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) organizes power wheelchairs into Groups. Group 3, 4, and 5 are considered CRT power wheelchairs, each serving different purposes for the user.

CRT power wheelchairs allow for rehab seating systems as well as alternative control options that are fitted specifically for the user. These chairs are ideal for someone who needs more than just a mobility aid such as those with ALS, spinal cord injury, MS, stroke, Parkinson's, cerebral palsy, or muscular dystrophy.



CRT Group 3

- Neurological conditions are the main factor.
- Increased speed, range, obstacle climbing, and turn radius than Group 2

CRT Group 4

- Minimize pain and tone triggers.
- More stability and higher speed
- Suspension designed for multiple terrains.



CRT Group 5

- Pediatric base

Dimensions

- Chairs are made custom to the user's needs and therefore will come in a variety of sizes.

Chair Weight

- Typically very heavy based on the weight of the batteries in the base of the chair.
- 100 lbs to 600 lbs depending on the needs of the user.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: 250-300 lbs.
- Bariatric: 700+ lbs.

Brands

- Permobil
- Quantum Rehab

Price Range

- Insurance companies may cover some or all of the cost for qualifying individuals.
- $3000 to $20,000+.

Accessories

- Trays
- Lateral pads
- Thigh guards
- Pommels
- Alternative driving and positioning controls
- Tablet or switch mounts
- Water bottles

Sizing

- All CRT Groups require a physician visit, an OT/PT evaluation, and an Assistive Technology Professional (ATP) directly involved to obtain measurements and functional outcomes for the individual user.

Safety

- Charge the battery nightly when in full-time use.
- Turn the chair off when getting in and out.
- Do not put full body weight on armrests or footplate.
- Use proper seatbelts.
- Be cautious when going over uneven ground or terrain.
- Check tire inflation regularly if applicable.
- Store the chair correctly at the right temperature to avoid battery damage.
- Perform regular maintenance checks.

- Avoid getting the chair and controllers wet.
- Visit the Permobil Power Wheelchair Guide (https//hub.permobil.com/power-wheelchair-guide) for more information.

Daily Living Equipment

Toilet Seat Riser

This device raises the toilet seat height, making it easier for individuals who need assistance sitting down or getting up from the toilet. Often this device is recommended for older adults who have limited balance, or individuals with joint replacements who are unable to get to a lower seated position.



Weight Capacity

- Standard: 250 to 300 lbs.

Common Differences

- Risers that clamp onto the toilet bowl
- Risers that replace the original lid entirely
- Spacers that attach to the toilet between the bowl and original seat
- These devices also include a variety of arm options for added stability during the toilet transfer.



Brands

- Drive
- Healthsmart
- Carex
- Vive

Price Range

- $30 to $120

Installation

- Ensure the seat is secured properly before use.
- Tighten clamp-on devices to ensure a proper fit.

- Check periodically that bolts haven't loosened

Sizing

- Toilet seat risers are available in standard and elongated models.

Safety

- When sitting down, the user should first back up until they can feel the back of their legs touch the seat, then proceed to sit.
- The support arms are only for assistance, do not put full body weight on them.
- Ensure that one's weight is at the center of the seat when sitting so the seat does not tip.



Toilet Safety Rail and Frame

These devices are beneficial for individuals who need additional support when sitting or standing up from the toilet. Often older adults find these devices helpful, along with those recovering from joint surgery. Toilet safety rails sit on the toilet seat and do not have legs whereas toilet safety frames are set around the toilet and have supporting legs.



Weight Capacity

- Up to 300 lbs.

Common Differences

Different variations include removable frames and rails and frames or rails that screw in for long-term use.

Brands

- Vive
- Pelegon
- Greenchief
- Guardian

Price Range

- $30 to $90.

Installation

For attached toilet safety rails:

1. Remove the two large nuts from the toilet seat bolts.
2. Lift off the toilet seat.
3. Align the mounting bracket with the holes on the toilet.
4. Replace the seat and securely tighten the nuts.
5. Insert the rails into the bracket, locking them in place.
6. Use the leg extensions to adjust the rails to the proper height.

For free-standing toilet safety rails:

1. Assemble the free-standing toilet safety frame.
2. Position the frame around the toilet with arms at either side.
3. Adjust the leg extensions to ensure proper height.
4. As these are not attached, use caution to apply force directly downward.

Safety

- Make sure the frame is located in the center of the toilet.
- If using a frame, make sure all legs are level and touching the floor.

3-in-1 Commode



A 3-in-1 commode can act as a bedside commode, toilet riser, and toilet frame depending on the needs of the user. While these can be purchased as a separate device, if the user would benefit from multiple functions of the device, this may be a good option.

1. Commode: When used at the bedside, the device can be used for those who are unable to get to and from the bathroom independently.
2. Toilet seat riser: The commode can be placed over the existing toilet and used with the splash guard that is also included with the commode. A splash guard is a tube, similar to the bucket that fits under the unit, but has no bottom so that the waste ends up in the toilet

but the sides of the splash guard ensure that no mess is caused due to the raised seat of the commode height being above the usual toilet height.

3. Toilet frame: Providing extra support when individuals are sitting on or getting up from their toilet.



Weight Capacity

- Standard: 350 lbs.
- Bariatric: 650+ lbs.

Common Differences

This is a simple device and not many variations are made, however, some might have increased seat height, portability, different folding functions, and different seat padding.

Brands

- Medline
- Healthline
- SevaCare
- Costway

Price Range

- $40 to $200+

Sizing

- Ensure that the frame is set to the correct height for the user.
- Ensure there is space around the toilet for the commode's overall width if using in the bathroom

Safety

- This device should not be used as a shower chair, as they are often made out of steel instead of aluminum and can rust.
- Make sure the commode is on an even surface and all legs are evenly in contact with the floor.

Shower Chair, Bench, & Seat



These devices are options for individuals unable to maintain a standing position while bathing.

Shower chairs are made out of aluminum and are lightweight, allowing the user to remove it from the shower after use, and shower benches often need to be installed into the shower wall, creating a long-term solution for the user.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: 300 lbs. to 500 lbs.



Common Differences

- Seat and support variations
- Built-in or removeable shower bench options

Brands

- Medline
- Drive
- Invacare
- HealthSmart
- BodyMed



Price Range

- $40 to $150+

Installation

Shower benches and seats should be placed properly in the tub with all four legs adjusted correctly to ensure that they are all in contact with the ground. Shower benches that are installed for long-term use in the tub or shower should be screwed properly into the wall and may require professional contractor assistance.

Safety

- Assure that the seat is assembled correctly.
- Check to make sure the bathroom floor is dry and there are no obstructions.
- Move cautiously when in the seat to avoid tipping or falling.
- Check the seat over before use to make sure it is clean and together correctly.

Standard and Sliding Tub Transfer Bench



Tub transfer benches are best used for individuals who are unable to swing their legs over the edge of a tub. These devices sit with one end out of the tub and one end in the tub. These devices are made from aluminum and are typically lightweight, making them relatively simple to move in and out of the tub.

Weight Capacity

- Standard: Up to 500 lbs.



Common Differences

These benches can either have a stationary seat or a sliding option that puts less effort on the user to get into the tub or shower. The sliding option might be more beneficial for those who require assistance to get from outside the tub to inside and vice versa.

Brands

- Drive Medical Equipment
- Body Med
- Medline

Price Range

- $50 to $200.

Sizing

- These devices are adjustable and therefore should be set to the best height for the user.
- All four legs should be in contact with the ground
- The backrest of standard benches should be placed inside of the tub to give more support while bathing.



Safety

- Always check the bench for stability before use.
- Supervision is recommended when using the device.
- Use a slip-resistant bathmat to increase stability.
- When transferring from a wheelchair to the bench, make sure the locks on the wheelchair are engaged.

Tub Grab Bar



Tub grab bars are designed to provide added stability when getting in and out of the bathtub. This device is beneficial for many different diagnoses that involve motor instability.

Weight Capacity

- Up to 500 lbs. depending on the model.

Common Differences



- These grab bars come in several variations and differ by installation or attachment style. Some are suction cupped onto the wall of the shower or tub. This is a low-cost option; however, it does not support as much weight and runs the risk of detaching.
- The clamp-on model is a good solution for an individual who does not require as much assistance once in the tub. The grab bars installed directly into the however are the sturdiest and have a greater weight capacity.

Brands

- Moen
- Medline
- BOBRICK
- Glacier Bay
- Guardian

Price Range

- $20 to $200

Installation

- All surfaces that the device is being clamped should be dry and free of soapy residue.
- Make sure that the bathtub is appropriate for grab bar use. The tub should not have a shower door track, lipped walls, or sloped inner walls.
- Do not overtighten the clamps.
- The ADA recommends that two bars be installed on the back wall, one 8 to 10 inches from the rim of the tub and the other parallel to it 33 to 36 inches from the base of the tub.

Safety

- Use slip-resistant bathmats when using the grab bar.
- Test the grab bar for stability before use.
- If using a suction grab bar, use it for stability only. Do not apply your full body weight.

Bed Rail

Bed rails can be used for individuals when there is concern about fall risks, or when the individuals require assistance getting in and out of bed or adjusting themselves once in the bed as well. They typically attach to the sides of the bed or are secured under the mattress.



Weight Capacity

- Standard: 300 lbs.
- Bariatric: 400+ lbs.

Common Differences



- Hospital bed rails are often not meant to be removed from the bed, making them the best long-term option.
- Adjustable bed rails include those with and without legs. The rails with legs that contact the floor provide more stability and support while the rails without legs are designed to be lighter weight and easier to transport.

Brands

- Lunderg
- Oasisspace
- Vive
- Medline



Price Range

- $35 to $250+

Installation

- Make sure the bed rail is in the appropriate position for the user.
- If the bed rail has legs, make sure they are the appropriate length to be in contact with the ground.

Safety

- Test the bedrail before use to ensure that it is sturdy.
- If using hospital bed rails, one section at a minimum should be lowered to ensure the user is not trapped.
- Reduce the gaps between the bed rail and the mattress.

Transfer or Slide Board

Slide boards are used when an individual is unable to stand and transfer to another surface independently. It is a sturdy low-friction flat board designed to bridge the gap between two surfaces so the user can safely slide between them without putting undue stress on their bodies or the caregivers.



Weight Capacity

- Up to 500 lbs
- Bariatric models are available also.

Common Differences

Slide boards come in two variations the standard slide board and the Beasy Board. The standard slide board is a wooden or plastic board while the Beasy board is made of plastic and has a disc that slides from one end to the other. The Beasy board also comes in several shapes to allow transferring to any surface easier.

There are also different configurations for hand holes, lengths, and purposes. There is a commode slide board as well as longer boards meant for vehicles.

Brands

- Drive Medical
- Beasy
- Vive
- Universal Medical

Price Range

- $25 to $250

How to Use a Transfer Board

- Preparation Position the user as close as possible to the surface they will be transferred to, making sure both are at a similar height. If the user is in a wheelchair, lock the wheelchair's brakes.
- Positioning the board Securely place one end of the transfer board under the user’s buttock

and the other end on the receiving surface, ensuring that the board is stable and won't move during the transfer.

- Transferring Assist the user in leaning towards the receiving surface, then help them slide their buttock across the board. The user may use their arms to help push themselves across, or the caregiver can assist with gentle pressure.
- Completion Once the user has successfully transferred, remove the transfer board and help them get settled in their new position.
- If using a Beasy Board, ensure that the user is on the seat appropriately and follow the same steps. The sliding disc should move with the user.



Safety

- If a caregiver is assisting, communicate clearly with the user throughout the transfer process.
- Do not rush the transfer, this can be a slow process.
- As the caregiver, ensure that proper body position is being used.
- Keep the transfer board clean and well-maintained.
- Be cautious of the track if using a Beasy board and ensure that the user's fingers are out of the way and that the disc is secure.

Patient Lift (Mechanical or Electrical)

Patient lifts are commonly used in hospitals, nursing homes, and other healthcare settings, but they are also increasingly being used in private residences.

Individuals who require assistance with transfers may benefit from using a patient lift, including those with conditions such as spinal cord injuries, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and cerebral palsy. Elderly individuals who have difficulty standing or walking may also benefit from using a patient lift.



Weight Capacity

- Standard: 400 to 450 lbs.
- Lightweight or folding models: 340 to 350 lbs.

Common Differences

There are different types of Hoyer lifts available, including manual and electric styles.

- Manual Hoyer lifts require the caregiver to pump a hydraulic system to raise and lower the patient, while electric Hoyer lifts are powered by a motor.
- Electric Hoyer Lifts are generally easier to use, but they may be more expensive than manual Hoyer lifts.
- Stand-assist lifts and Sara Steady lifts are variations of a patient lift that keep the person upright while transferring.

Brands



- Invacare
- VOCIC
- Proactive Medical
- Lumex

Price Range

- $500+

Sizing

Make sure the proper sized lifting pad/sling is being used (typically defined by weight and/or body dimensions on sling packaging).

Safety

- All user limbs should be kept close to them during the transfer to avoid injury.
- Transfers should be done slowly and with consistent communication to the user.
- Make sure the path of transfer is clear to eliminate the time the user spends suspended

Hip Kit

A hip kit is a set of tools that can assist individuals with daily tasks as they recover from hip replacement surgery or have another diagnosis that limits their mobility.

The kit typically includes:



- sock aide,
- reacher,
- long-handled shoe horn,
- long-handled bath sponge,
- dressing stick,
- elastic shoe laces,
- leg lifter

These tools are all used to ensure that the user does not break hip precautions while completing ADLs.

Common Differences

Each piece of equipment has a different function and purpose. Kist also might vary based on the equipment included.

Brands

- Rehabilitation Advantage
- Drive Medical
- FabLife
- Medline

Price Range

- $20 to $60 depending on contents

References

- What You Need to Know Before Choosing a Bariatric Wheelchair
- What is Complex Rehabilitation Technology (CRT) equipment?
- Selecting the Right Transport Chair
- Choosing The Right Cane or Walker
- Tips for using a cane
- Rollator Walker Guide
- Tips for Using Crutches
- Knee Walker: Training and safety guidelines
- How to Choose the Best Knee Scooter
- Better than Crutches and Knee Scooters
- How to Install Toilet Safety Rails
- How to Install a Raised Toilet Seat
- How to Use a Bath Transfer Bench
- What is a Hip Kit

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