

What can I do to Get Ready for rehab?

- ◆ Do your exercises given to you by the acute care Physiotherapist – these maintain the range of motion in your knee and hip joint.
- ◆ Don't fall – about 50% of people fall after amputation. The phantom sensation of your limb causes this. Falling on your residual limb can cause a lot of damage to your tissue. Take extra precautions when getting into the shower or tub.
- ◆ Follow the instructions about your wound care and use your shrinker sock or elastic bandage 23 hours per day to control the swelling in your residual limb
- ◆ Make a list of your goals, what activities you wish to return to.

The information in this document is intended solely for the person to whom it was given by the health care team.

What do I Bring the First Day of rehab?

Shorts, running shoes, shrinker sock or elastic bandage for residual limb, your prosthesis if you have one, and wound care dressings.

Where can I Park?

There is designated handicapped parking, and a small visitor parking lot (no charge) at G.F. Strong or paid parking at Children's Hospital on 28th Avenue.

Who do I Contact about my appointments?

Physiotherapist:

Linda McLaren
604-737-6282 voice box #8931
lmclaren@vanhosp.bc.ca

Social Worker:

Shelley Stewart
604-737-6522
sstewart@vanhosp.bc.ca

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G.F. Strong Outpatient Amputee Program

Answers to
Frequently asked
Questions
about Rehabilitation

G.F. Strong Rehab Centre

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Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 2G9 (604) 734-1313

Who is my Team?

Your core rehab team consists of your Physiatrist (rehab Doctor), Social Worker, Physiotherapist, and Prosthetist.

You also have access to services from Psychology, Dietary, Sexual Health, Driver's Rehab and Vocational Rehab, if they are required.

When does my Rehab start?

The earliest your rehab will start is about 10 days after discharge from hospital following your amputation. You will have been seen by a Physiatrist in hospital, or referred to the program by your Specialist or Family Doctor. The majority of people attend 2-3 times per week, for between 1-2 hours per session.

What is Rehabilitation?

Rehabilitation is the process of learning to live life with your prosthesis. It involves learning how to care for your skin and prosthesis, as well as relearning basic mobility (getting up off the floor, stairs, and walking on uneven and incline surfaces). Some people will need to relearn aspects of their job, if returning to your job is your goal.

What Factors influence my Rehab?

A number of factors can influence the length of rehab, factors like the healing time of your skin, your ability to learn new ways of doing things, and your emotional adjustment to your amputation. There is also a lengthy prosthetic fitting process prior to receiving your final permanent prosthesis.

Approximate Time Frames

The length of rehab varies depending on what your goals are. A previously healthy person having a below knee amputation will be walking without aids in approximately 3 months. An above knee amputee in about 5-7 months.

Learning to walk again, as normally as possible, takes a lot longer than most people think it should. It takes your residual limb some time to tolerate the pressures of your body weight.

Why do I Feel so useless at Home?

It may be a real shock to be less independent than you once were. Everything takes more time to do and this can be very frustrating. Accept the help of others during this early period after your amputation. You will regain your independence step by step.