

Patient & Family Guide
2025

Intensive Care Unit Getting You Moving

Cape Breton
Regional Hospital



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www.nshealth.ca

Getting You Moving

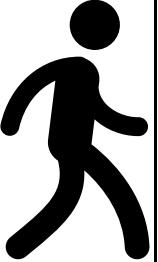
Why is it important for me to get moving?

- Staying in bed for long periods of time without moving can cause:
 - › Pressure injuries (bedsores)
 - › Confusion
 - › Blood clots
 - › Pneumonia (lung infection)
 - › Weak muscles
- It is important for people in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to move as much as they can, as early as possible. This helps you get better, faster.
- You may also be able to be discharged and go home sooner.

How can I move while in the ICU?

- Moving does not just mean walking. There are many ways to move, like:
 - › Having someone move your arms and legs while you are in bed
 - › Moving yourself in bed
 - › Sitting up on the side of the bed
 - › Moving from the bed to a chair
 - › Standing in place
 - › Walking

Over time, your ability to move will usually change in order, from step 0 to step 10:

Classification			
0	Lying in bed		
1	Sitting in bed, exercises in bed		
2	Passively moved in chair (no standing)		
3	Sitting over edge of bed		
4	Standing		
5	Transferring bed to chair		
6	Marching on the spot (at bedside)		
7	Walking with assistance of 2 or more people		
8	Walking with assistance of 1 person		
9	Walking independently with a gait aid		
10	Walking independently without a gait aid		

Mobility Progression

What if I am scared to move?

- If you have not been able to move for a while, it is common to feel scared to move.
- Your safety is very important to us. Even though moving might be scary at first, it is best for you to move as much as you can, as early as possible in your ICU stay.

How can my support persons help?

- The most important thing your support persons can do is to encourage you to move as much as possible.
- If staff say it is OK, your support persons can move your arms and legs for you when you cannot move them yourself.
- It may help for you or your support persons to keep a journal of how you move each day.

They can also:

- Call the unit for an update on how you are doing, or visit you anytime.
- Bring in your favourite games, puzzles, or music. You can try to move your fingers, feet or toes to the music, if you can.
- Download an app to help you relax together, like:
 - › Radioplayer Canada, an app to listen to different radio stations
 - › <http://radioplayer.ca>

- Meditation apps, like Calm and Headspace
 - › www.calm.com
 - › www.headspace.com

Who is on my movement team?

A team of people will help you move. You and your support persons are an important part of your movement team.



Other members of your movement team include:

- › **Physiotherapist:** Decides how you can safely move and helps you practice moving. They also teach you and your support persons about how to do safe transfers using equipment like a mechanical lift, a Sara® Stedy lift, or a walker.
- › **Rehabilitation Assistant:** Works with the physiotherapist to help you practice moving.
- › **Nurse:** Cares for you and helps you practice moving.
- › **Respiratory Therapist:** Help you breathe on your own or with machines. They can also help you practice moving, especially if you have a breathing machine.

- › **Occupational Therapists:** Assess you and help you do things like get out of bed, use the toilet, dress, groom, and wash. They also teach you and your support persons how to do safe transfers using equipment like walkers, wheelchairs, transfer boards, or grab bars.

Movement poster

- There is a movement poster on the wall near your bed. Every day, staff will write your movement plan for the day on the poster. This is so you will know what to expect that day.
- You or your support persons can also write down what they are doing to help you move, and any comments or questions about your movement. You or your support persons should also write on the poster every day.

Questions?

- Please ask a member of your movement team. We are here to help you.

Contact

Intensive Care Unit
Cape Breton Regional Hospital
1482 George Street
Sydney, NS B1P 1P3
› Phone: 902-567-7827

Notes:

This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find all patient education resources here:
www.nshealth.ca/patient-education-resources

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

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