

## IMMOBILITY

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Immobility refers to residents who are unable to move or reposition themselves on their own. These individuals are prone to complications related to their loss of mobility such as: muscle shortening, decreased range of motion (ROM) and the risk of developing pressure sores.

In an effort to maintain comfort, positioning and skin integrity, the OT/PT team work together with nursing to provide specialized equipment and additional assistance such as: the use of assistive devices, pressure 'off loading' equipment, positioning/splinting orthotics and the implementation of turning schedules.



## FALLS MANAGEMENT IN LTC

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Most residents in LTC are at risk for falls. Unfortunately, there is no way to prevent falls with absolute certainty. Therefore, one of the responsibilities of the OT/PT team is to monitor, identify and review reasons why a resident is falling.

Together with other members of the interdisciplinary team, they collaborate to identify and provide appropriate fall management strategies to help reduce the risk of falls and/or injuries related to falls.

## Where are we located?

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**Brentwood Care Centre**  
2727-16 Avenue NW  
Calgary, Alberta T2N 3Y6  
Phone: (403) 289-2576

**Chinook Care Centre**  
1261 Glenmore Trail SW  
Calgary, Alberta T2V 4Y8  
Phone: (403) 252-0141

**Southwood Care Centre**  
211 Heritage Drive SE  
Calgary, Alberta T2H 1M9  
Phone: (403) 252-1194



## UNDERSTANDING PHYSIOTHERAPY IN LONG TERM CARE

**General information for residents,  
their families and responsible parties**



## WHAT IS LONG TERM CARE ?

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Long Term Care (LTC) facilities are specifically designed for individuals who have complex health care needs, and for whom the ability to remain at home or within a supportive living setting is no longer a safe option for them.

In LTC, nursing care is provided 24 hours per day, 7 days per week which includes medication administration and assistance with "activities of daily living" such as eating, bathing, dressing, toileting (getting on and off the toilet), grooming, personal hygiene and transferring (to and from bed or wheelchair). Supplemental services include physiotherapy (PT), occupational therapy (OT), recreational therapy, and dietary services.

## PHYSIOTHERAPY IN LTC

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Physiotherapy in LTC looks very different from what you typically find in hospitals, rehabilitation facilities or the community.

Typically, individuals are admitted to LTC when their rehabilitation abilities have “plateaued” - meaning they are no longer able to improve upon or regain the physical abilities or functions that they have lost. When this happens, many individuals find that they are no longer able to do the things they were able to do just days or weeks earlier.

Physiotherapy for residents in LTC is often limited by the general effects of aging and other medical conditions that a person has acquired throughout his/her lifetime.

Thus, the primary goal of physiotherapy in LTC is to promote and maintain the level of function and mobility a resident has at the time of his/her admission, rather than rehabilitate or reverse the changes that have occurred due to his/her underlying medical condition.

Most times, this involves maintaining a resident’s ability to get in and out of bed, stand up, transfer to and from a chair, or walk with assistance.



## ABLE AND WILLING

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Physiotherapy is not always appropriate for everyone. In LTC, there is a list of “inclusion criteria” that a resident must meet in order to participate in physiotherapy:

- Expresses an interest, ability and willingness to participate on a regular basis
- Demonstrates an understanding and ability to follow directions
- Does not exhibit unpredictable behaviors
- Does not have any precautions or contraindications that prevents/precludes participation in physiotherapy
- Is medically stable

As well, there is a list of reasons why a resident in LTC may be discharged from a physiotherapy program:

- No longer meets the “inclusion criteria”
- Is not compliant with the program
- Consistently refuses to participate
- Is no longer able to follow directions
- Is no longer benefiting from the program
- Has achieved his/her own personal goals
- Has become medically unstable

Residents in LTC who are able and willing to participate in physiotherapy will be encouraged to do so. Residents in LTC who are refusing will have their wishes respected.

## FAQ

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### What is the difference between LTC & Rehabilitation Facilities?

Unlike LTC facilities that are home like in nature, rehabilitation facilities provide specialized rehabilitation services to injured or sick people, usually after a stay in the hospital. Rehabilitation facilities are designed to address short-term conditions in individuals who have the ability to improve from their condition.

### Is it too late to rehabilitate an old injury that is still bothersome?

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Unfortunately, the answer to this question is “yes”.

The body’s ability to heal diminishes over time. Muscles shrink, tendons become more brittle and the ability to convert food into energy slows down.

Symptoms of old injuries that have been around for years are not likely to improve, especially in the elderly.