

BALANCING RISK AND AUTONOMY IN REHAB: PATIENT GUIDE

TAKING RISKS TO IMPROVE RECOVERY – IS THIS RIGHT FOR ME?

Keeping you safe and maximizing your independence are both priorities at Toronto Rehab.

As part of your recovery journey, your rehab team will encourage you to move as much as you can. Activity and exercise can increase your independence; however, they may also increase your risk of falling and being injured.

While in rehab, you may choose to practice certain activities that put you at a higher risk of falling, but might also better prepare you for home. You or your care team can change or stop these activities at any time.

HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF HIGHER-RISK ACTIVITIES

- Transferring in and out of your wheelchair
- Walking with or without a device (such as a walker or a cane)
- Using the bathroom independently
- Exercising independently

WHAT IS A “THERAPEUTIC” FALL?

You may choose to practice activities that have a higher risk of falls because you feel that the benefits are greater than the potential risks of harm. Some of the benefits are that you may feel more independent during rehab and more prepared for life after rehab. Some of the risks might be falling and being injured. If you were to fall during such an activity, it would be considered a “therapeutic” fall, which we feel is different from an unexpected, unanticipated fall.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT

Before you practice higher-risk activities, your rehab team will:



- 1 Talk to you about your **mobility goals** and identify specific **activities** to help achieve these goals
- 2 Talk to you about the **risks and benefits** of these activities so that you (or your Substitute Decision-Maker) can make an informed decision about whether you wish to practice them
- 3 **Teach you:**
 - a. How to reduce your risk of falls
 - b. What to do in case of a fall
- 4 **Answer your questions**
- 5 **Communicate with other rehab team members** so they are aware of your plan
- 6 Regularly check-in **and update your activity plan if needed. This might include progressing your activities, or stopping them all together if your health changes.**