

Transitioning from Inpatient to Outpatient

When your child is discharged from inpatient rehabilitation and begins outpatient therapy care, it's a big change. Expectations for everyone on the care team – you, your child and the therapists – are different.

What should we do the first few days at home?

The first few days at home can be very hectic as you settle into your new routine. Many families have told us that it can be very challenging to make it to outside appointments during this time. Taking a week to establish routines at home before coming to outpatient therapy can be helpful for a number of reasons:

- During the week, you can identify some areas that you've found to be particularly difficult so we can target your child's outpatient therapies more effectively.
- If your child is returning to school, they might be very tired at the end of the day. Adding one thing at a time to their schedule can help ease the transition.
- Not having the added stress of trying to be on time to outside appointments can help your family return to a new normal much faster.
- Some initial issues that might happen in the first day or two can resolve on their own with just a little time.

How is outpatient therapy different from inpatient therapy?

- In inpatient therapy, your team worked with you and your child with the ultimate goal of helping you to be safe and comfortable caring for your child at home. Your outpatient team will continue that work, to help you and your child to be as independent as possible.
- In the inpatient setting, a lot of changes can happen very quickly. We know, from research, that it really helps to have a very intense therapy schedule during that time, **but** intensive therapies can also get in the way of doing the things you and your child want to do (attending a sibling's baseball game, hanging out with friends, and so on).
- As healing continues, it becomes more and more important to practice the skills learned in therapies in real-life settings, so in outpatient therapies, we use an Episode of Care model, which is a period of time where your child attends therapy in order to work towards defined goals and during a specified period of time, followed by a break to go practice skills.
- You will work with your outpatient therapy team to develop an Episode of Care plan that helps to meet the current goals of your child.
- Outpatient therapy might start with more therapy sessions in a week, but over time, those sessions will decrease as your child makes progress and move closer to a therapy break.
- Like in inpatient therapies, we try to be sure the outpatient therapy team is consistent, so the same therapists see your child most of the time. It's possible that your child might have to see more than one or two therapists per discipline (PT, OT and/or speech) at first, depending on frequency, but we will work to improve this as quickly as

we can.

What do I need to do differently to be sure my child gets the most from outpatient therapies?

- When you work with our scheduling team, be sure to look ahead at your child's therapy schedule to make sure the dates and times will work for you and your family.
- Leave yourself a little extra time when you are coming to appointments in order to park and check-in.
- The therapist that does your outpatient therapy evaluation will walk you through the process of check-in and where to speak with a scheduler if you have any questions.
- It's [very](#) important to check with your insurance company before starting outpatient therapy to be sure that outpatient therapy will be covered and what limitations might be in place.

[Make An Appointment](#) [651-290-8707](#)

This information is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice of your health care providers. If you have any questions, talk with your doctor or others on your health care team.

If you are a Gillette patient with urgent questions or concerns, please contact Telehealth Nursing at [651-229-3890](#).