

Understanding Post-Acute Care

What Is Post-Acute Care?

After leaving the hospital, many patients still need help recovering. Post-acute care is the care you receive after a hospital stay to help you heal, regain strength, or transition safely to the next stage of life.

Post-acute care is not a specific place. Instead, it describes a phase of recovery. The location depends on your medical needs, safety, and ability to participate in care.



Common Post-Acute Care Options

Inpatient Rehabilitation Facility (Acute Rehab)

Best for: Patients who can safely participate in intensive therapy

- At least 3 hours of therapy per day (physical, occupational, and/or speech therapy)
- 24/7 nursing care and regular physician visits
- Short-term stays focused on regaining strength and function
- Often recommended after stroke, major surgery, or serious injury



Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF)

Best for: Patients who need nursing care and therapy, but at a lower intensity

- 24/7 nursing care
- Therapy usually 1-2 hours per day, based on tolerance
- Can be short-term for recovery or longer-term if needs continue
- Commonly used when returning home is not yet safe



Long-Term Acute Care Hospital (LTACH)

Best for: Patients with complex medical needs who still require hospital-level care

- Daily physician oversight and 24/7 nursing
- Examples include complex wound care, breathing support, or multiple medical conditions
- Stays are typically longer than a regular hospital stay



Home Health Care

Best for: Patients who can return home but need intermittent skilled care

- Skilled nursing and/or therapy visits in the home
- Patient must generally be considered homebound
- Does not provide 24/7 supervision



Returning Home

Some patients are able to return home independently or with help from family, friends, or professional caregivers.



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Important to Know

- The care setting recommended is based on medical needs, safety, and recovery goals
- Insurance coverage varies by care type and individual situation
- Your hospital care team can help explain options and answer questions

