

Need to Know for Patients and Families

*What patients
and their
families need to
know before
hospitalization
or a nursing
home admission*

Restraint Use

Definition: A device that is used to limit or restrict movement

Why Is It Important? Staff sometime perceive the need to place restraints on individuals to prevent falls or prevent interference with treatment, such as pulling at tubes or intravenous lines. There are other, more effective ways to handle these situations. Restraints may actually increase risk of falls and injuries from falls and can cause other complications such as contusions, depression, skin breakdown, nutritional deficits, and constipation.

What You Can Do as a Family Member/Caregiver:

Family and friends can help reduce the use of restraints.

1. Ask the nurse to suggest ways you can be helpful
2. Bring familiar objects from home, such as a blanket or photographs
3. Visit often
4. Ask about alternatives, such as:
 - Walking program – Many facilities have daily assisted walks
 - Activity kits – May include puzzles, sewing cards, peg boards, slinkys, and Koosh balls
 - Music – Can help ease pain and reduce anxiety
5. Advocate to ensure needs are met, such as toileting, food and fluids, sleep, comfort, pain relief
6. Use calm, simple statements
7. Reduce excessive noise and activity, lower TV volume
8. Ask questions when restraints are considered