

Therapy Across the Continuum: Understanding Therapy in Different Hospital Units

Hospital Therapy Care Explained.

Therapy may be provided during a hospital stay to ensure a safe and successful return to home, school, and community. While in the hospital, a loved one may stay in different hospital units depending on their age, illness, or injury. Hospitals are organized in different ways and your loved one may move between the units as their needs change.

Some different pediatric hospital units include:

- Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)
- Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)
- General Pediatric Unit/Wing/Section
- Acute Inpatient Pediatric Rehabilitation Unit

Keep reading for an overview of the care provided in each of these hospital units.

Understanding Therapy Within the Hospital Setting

Hospital Unit	What is it?	Who would go there?	What are the Therapy Goals?	What is the Role For Families and Caregivers?
NICU	A unit for newborns that need extra medical care	Newborns who are born early and/or with an illness who need time in the hospital to grow and get extra treatment	The therapy team helps newborns learn to eat, breathe, and get stronger.	Families/caregivers learn how to care for their newborn's special health needs, helping them to grow and develop
PICU	A unit for infants, children, or teenagers that need extra medical care	Infants, children, or teenagers who have had a severe injury or illness and need to be in the hospital for intensive treatment and monitoring	The therapy team helps infants, children, or teenagers to stay as strong as possible while in the hospital by practicing daily activities (such as: eating, getting out of bed, walking, using the bathroom, bathing, etc.) and doing exercises.	Families/caregivers learn how to keep their loved one safe and active during their hospital stay as they prepare to return home or to transition to another unit
GENERAL PEDS UNIT/WING/ SECTION	A unit for infants, children, or teenagers with medical needs that do not require the intensity of the NICU/PICU	Infants, children, or teenagers who have had an injury or illness requiring hospitalization (patients may transition between hospital units based on their medical needs)	The therapy team helps prepare families/caregivers and their loved one for return to home and school. This may include: practice getting out of bed; showering, dressing, and brushing teeth; walking and climbing stairs; thinking, learning, and problem solving; etc.	Families/caregivers learn how to help their loved one get better while in the hospital and skills to practice after going home
ACUTE INPATIENT REHAB UNIT	A unit where infants, children, or teenagers receive several hours of therapy each day	Infants, children, or teenagers who need a high level of physical, occupational, and/or speech therapies every day and need the daily attention of medical staff.	The therapy team helps infants, children, and teenagers become as independent as possible (based on their age and injury) through practicing activities that are necessary to learn in order to go home safely. Routines are set up to be like home so families/caregivers are prepared to take over care when their loved one returns home.	Families/caregivers learn how to perform care and complete exercises to help their loved one improve their skills at home, school, and in the community after leaving acute inpatient rehab

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