

Choosing Equipment After a Stroke

A Practical Guide to Regaining Independence at Home and Beyond

Choosing Equipment After a Stroke

Recovering from a stroke is a journey that looks different for everyone. Some people regain their mobility quickly, while others may need ongoing support with walking, balance, daily tasks or getting around safely.

The right equipment can't speed up recovery, but it can make everyday life easier, safer and more comfortable while helping you maintain as much independence as possible.

At First Choice Mobility, we've supported many customers and their families following a stroke. One thing we've learnt is that choosing the right equipment isn't about doing everything at once—it's about selecting the right support at the right time.

This guide explains the types of equipment that may help during stroke recovery and what to consider before making a purchase.

Quick Summary

After a stroke, equipment may help you to:

- Move around your home more safely.
- Reduce the risk of falls.
- Conserve energy.
- Improve confidence.
- Remain independent for longer.
- Support rehabilitation alongside advice from healthcare professionals.

Always speak to your occupational therapist (OT), physiotherapist or stroke team before choosing equipment if you're unsure what is most suitable.

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How Can a Stroke Affect Mobility?

Every stroke is different.

Some people experience weakness on one side of the body, while others may notice changes to balance, coordination, speech, vision or fatigue.

Because recovery varies from person to person, equipment should always be chosen to suit your current needs—not someone else's.

Your physiotherapist or occupational therapist may recommend equipment to support your rehabilitation, improve safety and help you remain as independent as possible.

First Choice Mobility Insight

One of the biggest concerns we hear from customers is that using mobility equipment means “giving up.”

In reality, the opposite is often true.

Using the right equipment can help you stay active, conserve energy and continue doing the things you enjoy while your recovery progresses.

Walking Aids

If you're able to walk but feel unsteady, a walking aid may provide additional confidence and support.

Depending on your needs, this could include:

- Walking sticks

- Adjustable canes
- Tripods or quadrupods
- Walking frames
- Rollators with seats

The right choice depends on your balance, strength and walking ability.

Avoid buying a walking aid based on appearance alone. An incorrectly adjusted walking aid may do more harm than good.

Did You Know?

A rollator with a built-in seat allows you to stop and rest whenever needed, making longer outings less tiring and helping you conserve energy.

Wheelchairs and Powerchairs

Some people benefit from a wheelchair or powerchair during recovery, either temporarily or long term.

A Manual Wheelchair May Be Suitable If:

- You have someone to assist you.
- You only need occasional support.
- You are able to self-propel safely.

A Powerchair May Be More Suitable If:

- Walking long distances is difficult.
- You have reduced arm strength.
- You require greater independence.
- You need excellent manoeuvrability indoors.

Choosing between a wheelchair and a powerchair depends on your mobility, lifestyle and rehabilitation goals.

Myth vs Fact

Myth

Using a wheelchair or powerchair will stop your recovery.

Fact

Appropriately prescribed mobility equipment can help you stay active, reduce fatigue and continue participating in daily life while working alongside your rehabilitation programme.

Bathroom Safety Equipment

Bathrooms are one of the most common places for slips and falls.

Simple equipment can make bathing and showering safer and more comfortable.

Popular options include:

- Shower chairs
- Bath boards
- Bath lifts
- Grab rails
- Raised toilet seats
- Commode chairs

Your occupational therapist may also recommend additional adaptations for your home.

Rise and Recline Chairs

A rise and recline chair can make sitting down and standing up much easier.

Many people recovering from a stroke find these chairs particularly helpful because they:

- Reduce strain on the legs.
- Support safer transfers.
- Improve comfort.
- Encourage better posture.

Selecting the correct chair size is just as important as choosing the chair itself.

Adjustable Beds

If getting into or out of bed has become more difficult, an adjustable profiling bed may help.

Benefits include:

- Easier transfers.
- Improved comfort.
- Better positioning.
- Assistance with circulation.
- Reduced pressure on joints.

For some people, combining an adjustable bed with a pressure-relieving mattress can provide additional comfort.

Daily Living Aids

Small adaptations can often make a big difference.

Examples include:

- Reachers and grabbers
- Long-handled shoe horns
- Sock aids
- Kettle tippers
- Easy-grip cutlery
- Dressing aids
- Button hooks

These products are designed to make everyday activities easier while encouraging independence.

Funding and VAT Relief

Purchasing mobility equipment after a stroke can be a significant expense, but financial help may be available.

VAT Relief

Many mobility products can be supplied free of VAT if you have a qualifying long-term illness or disability and the equipment is for your personal use.

Read the GOV.UK guide to VAT relief for disabled and older people:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/reliefs-from-vat-for-disabled-and-older-people-notice-7017>

If you're unsure whether you qualify, we're happy to explain the process.

Funding

Depending on your circumstances, financial support may be available through:

- Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
<https://www.gov.uk/pip>
- Attendance Allowance
<https://www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance>
- Local authority support.
- Charitable grants.
- Veterans' organisations (where applicable).

You can also read our:

→ **Complete Guide to Mobility Scooter & Powerchair Funding**

Before You Buy Checklist

Before purchasing equipment, ask yourself:

- ✓ Has it been recommended by my healthcare professional?
 - ✓ Is it suitable for my current level of mobility?
 - ✓ Will it still meet my needs in six to twelve months?
 - ✓ Will it fit comfortably in my home?
 - ✓ Have I explored VAT Relief and funding?
 - ✓ Have I tried the equipment if possible?
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Questions We're Often Asked

Will I always need mobility equipment after a stroke?

Not necessarily. Some people only need equipment during rehabilitation, while others benefit from long-term support.

Can I get equipment through the NHS?

Depending on your needs and where you live, some equipment may be provided or arranged through your local NHS services or social care team. Speak to your occupational therapist or physiotherapist for advice.

Should I buy equipment before leaving hospital?

It's often best to discuss your needs with your discharge team before making significant purchases to ensure the equipment is appropriate.

Further Reading

The following organisations provide reliable advice and support.

Stroke Association

Practical information for stroke survivors, carers and families.

<https://www.stroke.org.uk/>

NHS – Stroke

Information about stroke recovery, rehabilitation and ongoing care.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stroke/>

NHS – Live Well

Advice on staying active and maintaining your health.

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/>

Age UK

Advice on independent living and reducing the risk of falls.

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

Continue Reading in the First Choice Mobility Advice Centre

You may also find these guides useful:

- Preventing Falls at Home
 - Five Simple Exercises to Help Keep You Moving
 - How to Choose the Right Powerchair
 - How to Choose the Right Mobility Scooter
 - VAT Relief Explained
 - Complete Guide to Mobility Scooter & Powerchair Funding
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Related Products

Explore our range of:

- Walking Sticks and Canes
 - Rollators
 - Manual Wheelchairs
 - Folding Powerchairs
 - Rise and Recline Chairs
 - Adjustable Profiling Beds
 - Bathroom Safety Equipment
 - Daily Living Aids
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Our Advice

Recovering from a stroke takes time, and everyone's journey is different.

The right equipment should support your rehabilitation, improve your confidence and help you remain as independent as possible. Don't feel that using mobility equipment means giving up—it can be a positive step towards regaining control of everyday life.

Seek professional advice where appropriate, take your time and choose equipment that meets your needs today while allowing for future changes.

Need More Help?

If you'd like advice on choosing equipment after a stroke, our experienced team is here to help.

We can explain the different options available, answer your questions and help you choose products that best suit your individual circumstances.

Freedom, with Confidence

At First Choice Mobility, we understand that recovering from a stroke can feel overwhelming. Our aim is to provide honest advice, practical solutions and ongoing support to help you or your loved one regain confidence and independence.

Download This Guide

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Download a printable PDF version of this guide to read offline or share with family members and carers.

Information You Can Trust

This guide is reviewed regularly by the First Choice Mobility team. It is intended for general information and should not replace advice from your GP, stroke consultant, occupational therapist or physiotherapist. If you're unsure which equipment is most appropriate, seek professional guidance before making a purchase.