

Maximum Accessibility



June 2011

Tips on Taking a Mobility Product out of Storage

When a mobility product has been in storage, perhaps for the winter months, there are some important factors to be considered when the scooter or power chair is returned to use. With spring here and summer just around the corner, follow these vital checkpoints.

- **Batteries** – Batteries should have been disconnected from the product when it went into storage. Make sure that the batteries are reconnected properly. Also fully charge the batteries before the product is used, as the batteries will lose charge when not being used for an extended period of time. Check the fully charged battery by performing a load test. If the batteries were not disconnected prior to storage, they will most likely need to be replaced.
- **Wheels and tires** – Inspect wheels and tires for any damage and/or dry rot, proper air pressure, and loose hardware. Make any needed repairs or replacement before operation.

- **Seating** – Inspect seating for any damage, loose hardware, and/or dry rot. Repair or replace as needed. Wash covers and wipe with disinfectant.

- **Electrical connections** – Inspect all wiring and harnesses to ensure a proper connection and the absence of corrosion. Secure any loose or dangling cords to prevent catching on door handles, etc.

- **Suspension/Structural Components** – Inspect structural components for any loose hardware or rust and replace or tighten as necessary.

There is much to consider when restoring a stored unit back in to service. Wheelchairs Plus has a wonderful service department that will help you with this or any other medical equipment issues. To schedule service please call Northern Minnesota 1-800-400-1833 and Central Minnesota 1-877-882-7700. You may bring in your equipment, or request that we come to your residence or facility.

June is:

Scleroderma Awareness Month

Scleroderma (skleer-oh-DUR-muh) is a group of rare, progressive diseases that involve the hardening and tightening of the skin and connective tissues — the fibers that provide the framework and support for your body.

Scleroderma results from an overproduction and accumulation of collagen in body tissues. Collagen is a fibrous type of protein that makes up your body's connective tissues, including your skin.

Localized scleroderma affects only the skin.

Systemic scleroderma affects the skin and also harms internal organs, such as the heart, lungs, kidneys and digestive tract.

Scleroderma can happen to anyone at any time in any geographical area. However, the disease affects women more often than men and most commonly

occurs between the ages of 30 and 50. Scleroderma can run in families, but in most cases it occurs without any known family tendency for the disease. Scleroderma isn't considered contagious, but it can greatly affect self-esteem and the ability to accomplish everyday tasks.

Scleroderma has no known cure — no drug will stop the overproduction of collagen. But the localized variety of scleroderma sometimes resolves on its own. And a variety of medications can help control the symptoms of scleroderma or help prevent complications. Along with medication, Physical or Occupational Therapists can help you to manage pain, improve your strength and mobility, and work on performing essential daily tasks to maintain your independence.

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

Standing Aids

There are many studies showing that passive standing prevents, reverses, or improves many of the adverse effects of prolonged immobilization. Passive standing can help with:

- Prevention of contractures (ankles, knees, and hips)
- Improvement of range of motion (spine, hips, knees and ankles)
- Reduction in spasticity
- Prevention or reversal of osteoporosis and resultant hypercalciuria
- Improvement of renal function, drainage of the urinary tract, and reduction in urinary calculi
- Prevention of pressure ulcers through changing positions
- Improvement in circulation as it related to orthostatic hypotension
- Improvement in bowel function
- Normalization of respiratory function
- Improve Hip Integrity
- Develop or improve motor skills
- Maintain or re-gain bone density

Not only does passive standing benefit a person medically it also benefits them psychologically. Its been shown to:

- Increase independence and self-image.
- Increase cognition.
- Enhance social development and interactions with peers.
- Decrease fatigue from inactivity.
- Helps prevent depression.

There are three categories of standing aids. Each type of stander has its advantages and disadvantages, and it is possible for more than one type of stander to be appropriate for an individual consumer. A discussion of each kind of standing aid—prone, supine, and vertical—follows.

Prone Standers

Prone standers support the front of the body; they lean the user forward at varying angles to keep him/her upright. To further steady the user there are lateral (side) supports as well as posterior straps or pads that hold the feet, knees, buttocks, and trunk in place. The angle at which a user stands can usually be varied. The supports can be adjusted for growth or a change in the user's physical condition.



Supine Standers

Supine standers support the back surface of the body and offer lateral supports to maintain symmetry as well as front straps or pads to position the feet, knees, and trunk. Most supine standers have an adjustable angle tray in front to support the arms and provide a work or play surface. Usually, the angle of the entire stander can be adjusted from horizontal (with the user on his/her back) to vertical. Most have casters for easier mobility. Supine standers, which are similar to tilt tables used in clinical settings to achieve a passive standing position, which stand fully upright are useful for users cannot stand fully upright. The supine category includes both frames and tables or boards.



Vertical Standers

For people who have fairly good balance and trunk control, vertical standers, standing boxes, and standing tables are often recommended because they generally provide less support than a prone or supine stander. Vertical standers, which usually provide three-point stabilization in a fully upright or vertical position, with supports at the knees, hips, and lower torso, are suited to children who have postural insecurity or are developing lateral weight-shifting skills. Vertical standers come in three types:

1. A **Standing Frame** consisting of two uprights with pads or straps to provide a little extra stability.
2. A **Standing Box** that enables the user to stand in a contained area.
3. A **Standing Table** with a box-like area for standing support or stability, and a high table surface with a cutout for the trunk.



Our ATPs have attended extensive training regarding standers and will not only help you to choose the best option for you or your client, our staff will help you file the necessary paperwork to obtain funding.

Employee Spotlight

June has Cassandra Morales in the employee spotlight. Cassandra is an Administrative Assistant in our St. Cloud location. She came to Wheelchairs Plus in August 2010 with an Associates Degree in Medical Transcription and Health Information Technology and a strong background in patient care.

Since the age of 16 she has worked in the medical field. She has worked as a CNA, PCA, HHA, and TMA. She worked in a group home setting for 10 1/2 years before joining Wheelchairs Plus.

Cassandra grew up mostly in a small town called Holdingford located in central MN. She has lived in six other states; South Dakota, North Dakota, Texas, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado.

Cassandra has been married for 7 years. She has four kids; Holden is 19 (Currently stationed in South Korea with the Army), Tahleah is 10, Jayce is 5, and Cooper is 2. The family also includes one dog, two cats, several fish, and a leopard gecko whom Jayce named "Lion".

Lately finding time for her favorite hobby of reading is difficult but Cassandra says she is going to work harder to find the time.



When asked what her favorite time of day is Cassandra says its is seeing how happy our clients are when they get a new piece of equipment.

Wheelchairs Plus would like to say

Thank You

to everyone that made our First Annual Vehicle & Home Access Healthy Living Expo a success.



Wheelchairs Plus

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