



Breast Cancer Rehabilitation Therapy

Focusing on Your Recovery





The right place for breast cancer rehabilitation

With breast cancer surgery behind you, it's time to focus on your recovery and rehabilitation with a healthcare partner who can get you back to living your life in comfort and confidence.

Occupational and physical therapy are important components of your rehabilitation program to help prevent shoulder and arm stiffness, muscle weakness and decrease the chance of developing lymphedema. Lymphedema is an accumulation of fluids in your arm that sometimes occurs after breast surgery. Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital and Northwestern Medicine Delnor Hospital have licensed physical and occupational therapists who specialize in breast cancer rehabilitation and are certified in lymphedema management. They will work with you one-on-one to develop a program to help meet your recovery goals.

Why is rehabilitation therapy important?

Rehabilitation therapy following breast cancer surgery can provide significant health advantages. For example, working with weights increases arm strength, helps with general conditioning and also can reduce the risk of osteoporosis.

Northwestern Medicine physical and occupational therapists understand the emotional and physical challenges you face after surgery. Working with professionals can help you through your recovery and teach you the self-management techniques you need to achieve your lifestyle goals.



Your course of care

Getting started

The process begins with a physician's referral for a comprehensive evaluation and treatment by a Northwestern Medicine therapist. You can bring the referral to your first appointment or have your physician's office fax it in advance. Your therapist will determine your current level of functioning and create a customized plan of care to address your specific needs, goals and expectations.

The type of rehabilitation therapy and the duration of therapy vary according to your individual needs. However, early intervention can shorten the length of time needed for you to see results and achieve your lifestyle goals.

What you can expect

The goal of Northwestern Medicine breast cancer rehabilitation therapy is to help you regain strength and mobility in the areas affected by your surgery and prevent or minimize lymphedema symptoms. Some of the areas your therapists will work with you on may include:

Range of motion

Progressive strengthening

Muscular re-education

Desensitization

Scar management

Skin care education

Lymphedema prevention and precaution tips

Identification of high-risk activities

Compression garment fitting and training, if required

Designed to meet your needs

Northwestern Medicine therapists provide rehabilitation expertise delivered with a personal touch. The benefits of our custom-tailored breast cancer therapy program include:

Trusted care from licensed physical and occupational therapists who specialize in breast cancer and lymphedema care

The ability to schedule one-on-one treatments with the same therapists throughout the course of your program, ensuring continuity of care and updates to your referring physician

The confidence of being supported by a hospital-based, full-service rehabilitation department

Convenient, complimentary valet parking

Staying healthy with our help

Northwestern Medicine is here for you every step of the way through your breast cancer rehabilitation therapy. Our physical and occupational therapists have the knowledge, tools and compassion to help you stay healthy and enjoy your life to the fullest.

Choosing Northwestern Medicine for your rehabilitation therapy is a great first step to staying healthy. Talk to your physician about a referral to Northwestern Medicine rehabilitation services so you can start focusing on your recovery.

To schedule an appointment for an evaluation or for more information, please call 630.933.6293. TTY for the hearing impaired 630.933.4833.





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