About Durable Medical Equipment: Toilet Accessories

This information explains different types of durable medical equipment for your toilet. It will also explain how to use and where to buy durable medical equipment for your toilet.

Raised Toilet Seats

A raised toilet seat is placed on top of your current toilet bowl. It’s used to raise the height of the toilet. It can help make sitting down and getting up from the toilet easier and safer.

Raised toilet seats come in 3 different heights: 2 inches, 4 inches, and 6 inches. There are 3 common kinds of raised toilet seats:

- Raised toilet seats (see Figure 1)
- Raised toilet seats with a lock (see Figure 2). A raised toilet seat with a lock attaches securely to the toilet bowl.
- Raised toilet seats with arms (see Figure 3). A raised toilet seat with arms allows people to use their upper body to help them sit or stand.
Raised toilet seats will fit both round and oval-shaped toilet bowls.

**How to use a raised toilet seat**

To install the raised toilet seat, lift up or completely remove your current toilet seat and place the raised toilet seat onto the toilet bowl. If the raised toilet seat has a lock, twist the knob to secure it.

**Where to buy a raised toilet seat**

You can buy a raised toilet seat at the following places:

- Medical supply stores
- Medical supply websites
- Retail drug stores (such as Walgreens or CVS)
- Supercenters (such as Wal-Mart)
- Home supply stores (such as Lowe’s or Home Depot)
- Online retailers (such as Amazon)

Raised toilet seats aren’t usually covered by insurance plans, so it’s best to check with your insurance provider to find out what your plan covers.

If your insurance provider covers raised toilet seats, ask your doctor for a prescription for one. Then you can submit the prescription to your insurance provider after you buy it.
Commodes

A commode is a type of portable toilet. It isn’t hooked up to any plumbing and doesn’t flush. Instead, waste is caught in a bowl under the seat, and the bowl is emptied by hand. Commodes can be useful for people who have trouble moving around. You can put a commode near the bed or in any room. You can also take out the bowl under the seat and put the commode over your toilet. The seat of the commode is higher than your normal toilet seat, so it can make sitting down and standing up easier.

There are 3 common kinds of commodes:

- **Standard commode** (see Figure 4).
- **Drop arm commode** (see Figure 5). A drop arm commode is helpful for people who can’t stand and need help moving to and from the commode. The drop arm makes it easier to move to the commode seat from a seated position.
- **Rolling commode** (see Figure 6). A rolling commode is useful because it’s easy to move around. It can also be used as a shower chair, as long as there isn’t a big difference in height between the bathroom floor and the shower stall. Remember to take out the bowl if you use the rolling commode as a shower chair.

How to use a commode

Commodes don’t need to be installed. You or your caregiver can put your
commode together at home. Follow the instructions that come with the commode you choose.

Some people may need help moving to and from their commode. If you need help, be sure to ask your nurse or caregiver.

**Where to buy a commode**

You can buy a commode at the following places:

- Medical supply stores
- Medical supply websites
- Retail drug stores (such as Walgreens or CVS)
- Supercenters (such as Wal-Mart)
- Online retailers (such as Amazon)

Commodes aren’t usually covered by insurance plans, so it’s best to check with your insurance provider to find out what your plan covers.

If your insurance provider covers commodes, ask your doctor for a prescription for one. Then you can submit the prescription to your insurance provider after you buy it.

**Toilet Frames**

A toilet frame is placed over your toilet to help give your arms support when getting on or off the toilet seat (see Figure 7). It may be helpful if you need more support getting on and off the toilet, but you don’t have enough space to put a commode over your toilet. A toilet frame can also be used if you prefer to use your current toilet seat instead of a commode.
How to use a toilet frame

To use your toilet frame, you’ll need to attach it to your current toilet. You or your caregiver can do this using a screwdriver. For more information on how to install your toilet frame, follow the directions that come with the one you choose.

Where to buy a toilet frame

You can buy a toilet frame at the following places:

- Medical supply stores
- Supercenters (such as Wal-Mart)
- Home improvement supply stores (such as Lowe’s or Home Depot)
- Online retailers (such as Amazon)

Toilet frames aren’t usually covered by insurance plans, so it’s best to check with your insurance provider to find out what your plan covers. If your insurance provider covers toilet frames, ask your doctor for a prescription for one. Then you can submit the prescription to your insurance provider after you buy the toilet frame.
If you have any questions, contact a member of your healthcare team directly.
If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5:00 PM, during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.