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PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# About Durable Medical Equipment: Transport Wheelchairs

This information explains what a transport wheelchair is, how to use it, and where to buy it.

A transport wheelchair (also called a companion chair or roll-about wheelchair) is a wheelchair that's lighter and easier to use than a standard wheelchair (see Figure 1). It can be useful for a person who doesn't need to use a wheelchair all the time but wants to use one sometimes. Some people choose to use transport wheelchairs to travel to and from their appointments safely.



Figure 1. Transport wheelchair

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Transport wheelchairs aren't made for traveling long distances. If you want a wheelchair for longer distances, ask your nurse about getting a standard wheelchair.

A standard transport wheelchair can support a person who weighs up to about 300 pounds. A heavy-duty transport wheelchair can support a person who weighs up to 400 pounds. Check with the wheelchair manufacturer to see how much weight your wheelchair can hold.

## How to Use a Transport Wheelchair

Transport wheelchairs aren't made to be moved by the person sitting in the wheelchair. A caregiver has to help push the wheelchair.

## Where to Buy a Transport Wheelchair

You can buy a transport wheelchair at the following places:

- Medical supply stores
- Medical supply websites (such as [Wheelchair.com](http://Wheelchair.com))
- Retail drug stores (such as Walgreens or CVS)
- Supercenters (such as Wal-Mart or Target)
- Online retailers (such as Amazon)

Transport wheelchairs are sometimes covered by insurance plans, but usually only with a prescription from your doctor. It's best to check with your insurance provider to find out what your plan covers.

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

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](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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