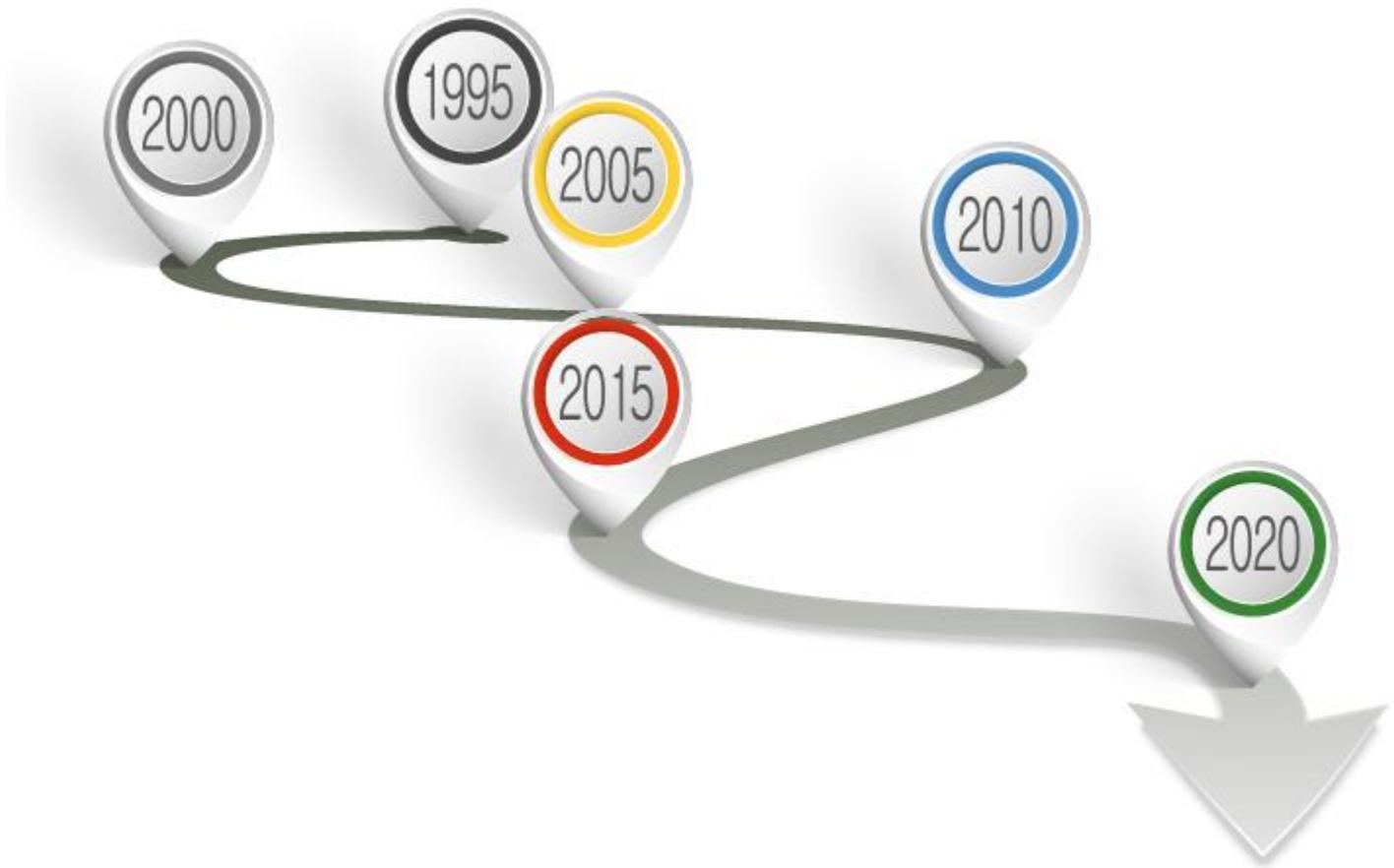


The Ultimate Guide to Your Stroke Recovery Timeline

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Do you know what your stroke recovery timeline will look like?

Usually it's hard to know because [every stroke is different](#).

And because each stroke is different, many professionals must refrain from giving you an estimate of how long your recovery will take because it's impossible to tell.

But we get to do things a little differently on this blog.

Instead of skirting around the issue, we're going to do our best to give you an accurate overview of what your timeframe might look like.

In this article you will find:

- An outline of the places you will stay after stroke
- A general sense of how long it will take
- Important information regarding the speed of your recovery

Sound good? Let's dig in.

Your Stroke Recovery Timeline Is Unique

You've heard us say it a zillion times in other articles: every stroke is different.

We keep drilling this point because it means that you need to look at your unique stroke factors to get an idea of what your unique recovery will look like.

Comparing your recovery to someone else's recovery with roughly the same stroke deficits as you can help give you a general sense of what to expect, but it will never be exactly the same.

That's why it's sooo important to look at your unique factors, which include the size of your stroke, [location of your stroke](#), and resources available.

One survivor who experienced a small stroke might recover in a few months while a survivor who experienced a massive stroke may honestly take a few decades to heal.

While the latter is unfortunate news, don't worry! We will discuss some tips on how to speed your recovery along near the end of this article.

The Places & Phases of Early Stroke Recovery

There are 3 different places that you will go during the beginning stages of stroke recovery.

1. The Hospital

A stroke is a medical emergency and all stroke survivors will be taken to the hospital immediately. The duration of your stay could range from a few days to even a few months in rare cases.

Factors that influence the duration of your stay could include the need for surgery, the cause of your stroke, and what therapy is needed.

From here, you will either go to inpatient care, a skilled nursing facility, or home.

2. Inpatient Care / Skilled Nursing Facility

An inpatient rehabilitation facility is where you may live short-term. It is geared for patients who can participate in a minimum of three hours of therapy a day, can benefit from more than one type of therapy (like physical and speech therapy) and are planning to reintegrate into community living.

A skilled nursing facility is where you may live long term. They are intended for stroke survivors who require daily but less intensive therapy.

3. Outpatient Care / Home

Depending on your stroke deficits, your provider may recommend that you continue therapy either with a therapist who visits your home or at an outpatient therapy clinic. At these clinics, you will likely visit once or twice a week and work with a therapist to achieve your recovery goals.

Those who reduce their stroke deficits and achieve a healthy level of independence will be released from outpatient care and sent home to continue rehabbing at home.

Making Home Therapy Work for You

This is where recovery truly falls into your hands. If you are not consistent or diligent about following your stroke therapy program, you will not see good results.

(Read: [5 Ways to Succeed with Stroke Therapy at Home](#))

Some survivors start to plateau right after getting sent home; others go on to see a full recovery. Your outcome is largely determined by your work ethic and partially determined by the resources available.

This is why so many of our patients love our [home therapy device FitMi](#). It's helps you bust through plateaus by giving your brain everything it needs to heal and improve movement in your body.

A Rough Look at Stroke Recovery Timeline Durations

Like we said earlier, every stroke is different and your stroke recovery will be different from others.

However, it's worth pointing out a few trends that tend to occur after stroke to help give you a general idea of what to expect.

1 Month Post-Stroke

One clinical study confirmed that recovery is fastest in the first few weeks after stroke, but also continues well beyond this phase.

3 Months Post-Stroke

The first three months after stroke are when rapid healing occurs. This is because the brain enters a state of heightened plasticity, which simply means that it's rapidly trying to heal itself.

6 Months Post-Stroke

After the first three months, the brain will exit the state of heightened plasticity. This typically manifests as a slow-down in your progress.

Do not mistake a slowdown in your progress as a sign that recovery is stopping. Recovery will always continue when you put in the effort.

Recovery only stops when you stop. Read our [article on plateaus](#) to learn more on why you should keep going no matter what.

1 Year Post-Stroke

At this point, there are no more patterns that we can report. At one year post-stroke, results vary a lot. However, it's worth pointing out that anything is possible.

If for some reason you had the misfortune of having a doctor or therapist impose limiting beliefs on you, it's incredibly important to kindly [cast those limiting beliefs aside](#).

An example of a limiting belief is that you will never be able to walk again. If you adopt this belief as your own, then of course you will never walk again because you won't even try. But if you stick to your own beliefs and believe in your potential, then you just might be able to walk again after lots of hard work.

In our opinion, anything is possible. Doctors and therapists have rules and regulations about what they can and cannot say to you. We are allowed to say whatever the heck we want.

So no matter what you were told about the extent of your recovery, never settle for anything less than [a full recovery](#).

20 Years Post-Stroke

Stroke recovery is something that takes many years for many survivors. If for some reason you stopped rehabbing at some point, you can always pick things back up again.

Because recovery continues whenever you put in the hard work (i.e. [repetitive practice](#)).

For example, we have seen a survivor *24 years post-stroke* improve his hand function with [MusicGlove](#). That's almost two and a half decades post-stroke! Which goes to show...

Anything is possible at any stage post stroke.

The Stages That Spasticity Goes Through

Spasticity is the stiffness in your muscles that most survivors will experience post-stroke. If you don't know how to treat spasticity, we highly recommend our article on [understanding spasticity](#). It's one of our most popular articles for a reason.

As you progress through your recovery, your spasticity will be reduced in stages. Identifying yourself with any of these stages will help give you an idea of how far along you are in your recovery.

Read about [the Brunnstrom stages of stroke recovery](#) to learn more.

How to Speed Recovery Along

Alright, now we're getting to the good stuff.

Many people are looking for quick tricks to help speed their recovery along. But most of them are looking in the wrong places.

There is no magic pill that can speed recovery along; and there is no shortcut to make things lightning fast.

However, there are some science-based tactics that you can use to help speed your recovery along. They are:

- [Mental practice](#)
- [Meditation](#)
- [Outcome-oriented goals](#)

- Consistency
- Repetitive practice
- Lots of sleep
- Busting limiting beliefs
- Rejecting compensation techniques (when appropriate)

If you incorporate most of these tactics into your recovery, it will help you progress through your recovery at a very steady, speedy pace.

If you aren't convinced that these tactics can help (we get it – they pale in comparison to nonexistent magic pills), rest assured.

There is a lot of science behind each of these tactics. We encourage you to look into them all.