

How to Walk Again After a Stroke in 5 Steps

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Learning how to walk again after a stroke will help you regain your independence. It can be a long process though because walking is a complex task that involves many different muscles groups and cognitive functions working together.

To help you get back on your feet, this article will guide you through all the steps that you need to take to walk again after a stroke. Let's dig in.

1. Rehabilitate Your Feet and Legs

Your feet and leg muscles are the foundation of walking. To walk, you need to put one foot in front of the other. Many stroke survivors have difficulty moving one of their legs, however, and some survivors have a condition called foot drop, which involves difficulty with dorsiflexion (lifting the front part of your foot). In order to regain the ability to use these muscles, you need to perform leg and foot drop exercises to retrain your brain.

Here are some guides on how to do that:

- [Leg Exercises for Stroke Patients](#) 1/23/2017
- [Foot Drop Exercises for Stroke Patients](#) 2/3/2017

2. Work on Your Balance and Core

Balance is also crucial for walking. Aside from your foot and leg exercises, it's a good idea to practice balance exercises too. This could involve standing on one leg for a couple minutes a day, or heel-to-toe walking.

Guide: [Balance Exercises for Stroke Patients](#) 9/18/2015

And don't forget about your core! Having a strong core is essential for staying balanced while walking. So add some core exercises to your rehabilitation program too.

Guide: [Core Exercises for Stroke Patients](#) 11/14/2016

3. Relink Mind to Muscle

Rehab exercise will be the bread-and-butter of your walking rehabilitation program. The more you practice using your muscles, the more strength and coordination you will gain. Practice helps activate neuroplasticity, the mechanism that your brain uses to rewire itself and learn new skills. The more you repeat your rehab exercises, the stronger the new connections in your brain become. So while you're working on strengthening your feet, legs, and core, try to practice with lots of repetition.

4. Make Sure Your Vision and Spatial Awareness Is Good

Good vision and spatial awareness are important for walking too. You need to be able to see where you're going and spot any bumps or obstacles in your path. So if you have vision problems after stroke, then you might need vision therapy to improve your vision before you can safely walk.

You should also be aware of a condition known as one-sided neglect, which can cause stroke patients to be completely unaware of their affected side – and also unaware that they're unaware! This can be dangerous when you're walking as you can bump into things and hurt yourself – and we don't want that! Typically, your doctor or therapist will let you know if you have one-sided neglect, and a caregiver will also be able to pick up on it too.

Guide: [Treating One-Sided Neglect After Stroke](#) 11/13/2015

5. Try Task-Specific Training

Perhaps the best way to improve your walk is with “task-specific training,” which pretty much means to practice walking to get better at walking! Your brain gets better at what you repeatedly practice, and, well, practicing your walk is a great way to get better at walking.

If you use a walker or a cane, that's a great place to start. Try going on walks around your living room or around your neighborhood with a caregiver. Extend the duration of your walks as you get stronger.

If you don't have enough movement to practice walking with a walker, that's okay too. Just practice your foot, leg, and core rehab exercise diligently. They will help you will rebuild enough strength to progress to a walker or cane.

In fact, most therapists will start patients with strengthening exercises for the feet, legs, and core before they even begin with walking exercises because you need a solid foundation for safe practice.

Strengthen Your Feet, Legs, and Core with FitMi

A great home therapy program that helps strengthen all the muscles involved in walking is FitMi. FitMi is our interactive home therapy device that helps you achieve 12 times more repetition of full-body rehab exercises than you would achieve in the clinic. This helps you see faster results than just working with a therapist alone. One of our customers, Mary, said that FitMi helped improve her balance and walking ability within just one month of using the device. It also helped her walk up the stairs by herself for the first time ever!

Summary

There's a lot of work to do when it comes to improving your gait after stroke.

Muscle-wise, you want to work on retraining your feet, legs, and core so that you can improve your balance and coordination.

You also want to make sure that you have no vision or attention impairments that could make walking a hazard.

If you're looking for a good home therapy program to help you improve your walking after stroke, then you might want to give FitMi a try!