



CREDIT VALLEY
THE CREDIT VALLEY HOSPITAL

A FAMILY GUIDE TO LEAST RESTRAINT

Patient and Family Education



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What is a restraint?

A restraint is a device that restricts a person's movement or access to his or her own body. There are many different types of restraints. A restraint could be a vest tied to a wheelchair or bed. It could also be a chair that has a lap tray that the person cannot remove.

A restraint may be just a seat belt. If the person wearing it cannot open it to get up, then it is a restraint. Similarly, a person may like having a tray across the arms of his or her chair because it provides a surface on which to place things. But if a person is not in control over whether or not it is used, it is a restraint.

Certain medications may be given to help prevent a patient from harming themselves or others. If it is given for this purpose it is considered a chemical restraint.

How long will restraints be used?

In keeping with the hospital's policy on least restraint, the need for restraints will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Whenever possible, alternative methods will be used first.

The needs and abilities of our patients change from day to day. Having no restraints one day may work well, but may need to be changed the next day.

As a partner in care, you will be asked to participate in planning and problem solving.

What is least restraint?

At the Credit Valley Hospital we believe in a philosophy of least restraint to preserve maximum patient comfort, safety and dignity.

As health care providers we support a policy of least restraint through:

- Trying alternatives to restraint first and continuing to evaluate them on an ongoing basis.
- Placing a person under control through the least restrictive restraint measure possible.
- Demonstrated respect for patient autonomy and family involvement in the decision making process.
- Multidisciplinary approach to care planning.

There are times when restraints need to be considered. Restraints were once used to prevent a patient from falling or from pulling

out needed medical tubes and equipment. We now know that restraints may have negative consequences, such as depression, increased agitation and muscle weakness. Complications can include skin problems, incontinence and loss of mobility and dignity.

If restraints are considered, family members or substitute decision makers and members of the health care team will meet to discuss possible alternatives and the need for restraints.

How can family help?

Family members play an important role in keeping patients in a safe and comfortable environment with the least restraint possible.

- If at all possible, spend some extra time on the unit when needed.
- You are part of the team. If you have any concerns, please speak with the staff.