

Patient information

Guidelines for choosing a Chair

You have been seen by a health professional who has suggested you may find a specialist chair useful for managing your health condition.

What is?

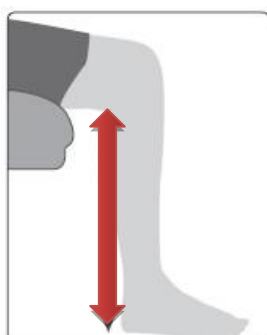
Achieving a good, comfortable seating position helps prevent tiredness and other complaints ensuring the body adopts the most natural posture. To ensure the correct seat you need to consider the following factors.

- Seat height
- Armrest height
- Seat depth
- Seat width
- Seat base
- Style of chair

Seat height:

The height of a seat can determine how easy it is to get in and out of it. A higher seat will make it easier to stand up and sit down, particularly if you find it difficult to push up using your arms or have any weakness in your legs.

The correct seat height can be worked out by measuring the distance from the floor to the crease at the back of the knees. When seated the hips and knees should be at right angles (90 degrees) and your feet flat on the floor.

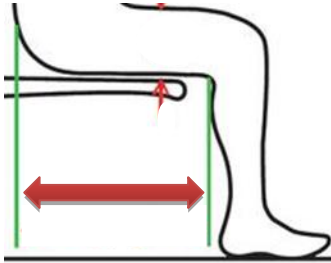


Armrest height

Armrests should provide side support and help you stand up. They should be wide enough to support your forearms when relaxing. Your shoulders should not be hunched or drooped when on the arm rests.

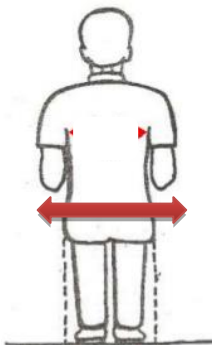
Seat depth

The seat needs to be deep enough to support the full length of the thighs. To calculate the correct depth measure the distance from the back of the hips along the thighs to approximately 3cm (1.5") behind the knees. When seated you should be able to place 2 fingers together between the edge of the seat and the back of the knee.



Seat width

The seat should be wide enough to allow you to sit comfortable whilst reading, writing, knitting etc., and to shift your position, but narrow enough to allow you to make use of the armrests. A good guide is to measure the width of your hips plus a clenched fist on either side.



Seat base

If you are going to be sat in your chair for long periods, or find it difficult to adjust your position, then a chair with pressure relieving features are worth considering. Alternatively if your chair has a removable cushion then a pressure relieving cushion can be used in its place.

Style of chair

Getting up and down from a chair is good daily exercise and helps maintains strength in your legs. We would always recommend following leg strengthening exercises to help you stand up from a chair independently, however if you are having severe mobility problems you may find a riser recliner chair useful. You can purchase riser chairs, and recliner chairs and chairs which are a mixture of the both. They can be manually operated or powered by mains electricity. The mains powered chairs are particularly useful for those with poor strength as the manual chairs can take some effort to adjust. Mains powered riser recliner chairs can cost from around £250 up to about £800.

Recliner chairs which allow the legs to be raised are particularly useful if you are in your chair for long periods allowing you to adjust your seating position to multiple positions throughout the day.

Sources of information

Where to purchase in East Sussex and online:

- You can find impartial information about a wide range of daily living equipment on the Disabled Living Foundation website 'Living Made Easy'. This charity provides advice on the types of equipment available and offers a range of suppliers.
www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk – helpline: 0300 999 0004
- An online search for "Raiser recliner chair" will give you a wide range of all options.

Some Local and Online companies that sell chairs*

*please note these are not recommendations, just a suggestion of options

- Complete Care Shop: **www.completecareshop.co.uk**
Telephone: 03330 160 000 – Email: sales@completecareshop.co.uk
- Ghyllside Healthcare
10 Menzies Road
Ponswood Ind. Est.
St Leonards on Sea, TN38 9BB
01424 714646
www.ghyllsidegroup.co.uk
- My Health Mobility
Unit 13, North Crescent
Diplocks Way
Hailsham BN27 3JF
01323 444861
www.myhealthmobility.co.uk
- NRS Healthcare: www.nrshealthcare.co.uk
Telephone: 0345 121 8111 – Email: customerservice@nrshealthcare.co.uk
- Southern Mobility Centres,
2a Cavendish Avenue,
Eastbourne, BN22 8EN.
01323 645067
www.southernmobility.com
- Procter Healthcare
8-9 Station Parade
Eastbourne BN21 1BE
01323 417 508
www.procterhealthcare.co.uk

Second hand chairs are often available in shops such as Furniture Now and Hastings Furniture Service.

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 5860 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: (01424) 755255 Email: esh-tr.AccessibleInformation@nhs.net

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Natasha Woodgate Occupational Therapist

Sandy Butler Occupational Therapist

The directorate group that have agreed this patient information leaflet:

Joint Community Rehabilitation Team (Bexhill, Hastings and Rother)

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