

LEAVING THE ICU

As recovery begins, you can learn about next steps for treatment and care.



AFTER THE ICU

Members of the intensive care unit (ICU) team will talk with you about what may come next. They will want to hear about your expectations and any concerns you may have.

When patients in the ICU start to feel better, they will:

- Move to another unit in the hospital,
- Return home, or
- Transfer to another health-care facility

Full recovery after the ICU can take months or even years.

NEXT STEPS

Patients in the ICU get a full evaluation before any decision is made about next steps. Options may depend on the patient's insurance and costs of care.

Team members who may evaluate the patient include:

- Doctors
- Case managers
- Social workers
- Physical and occupational therapists

If the patient can't be cared for at home, let the health-care team know.

Other options may include rehabilitation and skilled nursing facilities.



OTHER HOSPITAL UNITS AND FACILITIES

Other health care providers and facilities can help the patient outside the ICU:

- 1** A **STEP-DOWN UNIT** provides a level of care between the ICU and a general hospital unit.
- 2** A **LONG-TERM ACUTE CARE HOSPITAL** provides ongoing specialized care for about 3 to 4 weeks.
- 3** A **REHABILITATION FACILITY** offers therapy services to help people safely regain their independence.
- 4** A **SKILLED NURSING FACILITY** offers long-term residential care and promotes activities of daily living.



RECOVERY AND POST-INTENSIVE CARE SYNDROME

Some people may experience post-intensive care syndrome (PICS) after leaving the ICU.

PICS is a collection of physical, emotional, and mental symptoms:

- + Symptoms can linger after leaving the ICU.
- + Symptoms may include muscle weakness and issues with thinking, memory, and attention.
- + There are treatment options and support for people with PICS.

Talk to a doctor if you or the patient you care for has symptoms.

BEGINNING A NEW PHASE

Leaving the ICU means that the doctors agree that the patient no longer needs intensive monitoring and treatment. A new phase of care can begin safely.

