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# Restraint & Secure Spaces

Information for  
residents, families,  
and caregivers.



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*No matter where one lives, risks are a part of everyday life. At Good Samaritan, we continually strive to create a safe environment for our residents.*

*At the same time, we must respect the resident's right to dignity, comfort, and independence.*

## Restraint

We all want safe, compassionate care for those we care about, and those we care for. Sometimes safety requires limiting a person's activity or behaviour.

Good Samaritan demonstrates commitment to the principle of restraint as a last resort and the practice of least restrictive restraint through our policy on Restraint as a Last Resort and Pharmacological Least Restraint. There are four types of restraint recognized by Good Samaritan:

- **physical** restraint is hands-on holding of arms, legs, or body;
- **pharmacological** (medicine) is a restraint when given to control behaviour or activity;
- **mechanical** restraint, such as a lap belt, limits movement; and
- **environmental** restraint limits a person to a room or area by using a barrier such as a door the person cannot open.

### What you need to know

Restraint is a last resort because of the many risks and safety concerns associated with its use. Risks include:

- cardiac arrest, strangulation, death;
- emotional trauma, fear, mistrust of health care providers;
- medicine side effects such as confusion, falls, not being able to sleep at night;
- loss of muscle strength, falls;
- stress, delirium; and/or
- frustration, hopelessness, agitation, anger.

### When are restraints used?

Restraints may be used when there is safety risk to the resident or others and other positive strategies are not effective.

### Who decides when a restraint is to be used?

Restraint use is a health care decision made by the resident and/or legal health representative with the support of the health care team, including but not limited to a Physician, Nurse Practitioner and/or, Pharmacist.

### How can you help?

Residents, legal health representatives, families, and others can share ideas and assist health care providers to understand what helps and what upsets the resident. You can help identify things that may work instead of restraint.

## Secure Space

In Alberta, an environmental restraint that is used for resident safety and not as a means to control behaviour, is considered a Secure Space. This includes, but is not limited to:

- secure unit;
- secure care home; and
- technological method that limits a resident's ability to exit a care home/unit (wander alert system).

### Restraint and Secure Spaces review

Where a restraint or Secure Space is in use regular review and monitoring of the effectiveness and appropriateness will be completed. For both Restraint and Secure Spaces, the primary goal is to discontinue or use less restrictive measures at the safest and earliest time. You will have the opportunity to participate in reviews and provide feedback to the health care team.

*Note: in British Columbia, Secure Spaces are managed as environmental restraints.*