

## Post-Polio Program

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Established in 1986, the NRH Post-Polio Program is the largest in the Washington metropolitan area and is one of only a few such programs across the country. Its goal is to help individuals become more effective in managing polio-related health problems through comprehensive evaluation, treatment, follow-up, and education.

The Program is directed by Lauro Halstead, M.D., who is one of the nation's leading authorities on the diagnosis and management of polio-related health problems. The Program is staffed by an interdisciplinary team of health professionals with special expertise in and understanding of the unique physical, psychosocial, and emotional needs of persons who are experiencing the late effects of polio.

The NRH Post-Polio Program provides services to persons who had polio many years ago and now feel they are experiencing new health problems that may be related to their polio. People who are not experiencing new health problems but are interested in learning how to avoid or minimize late complications are also seen.

### ***Services Offered***

Patients are evaluated and treated at National Rehabilitation Hospital, as part of Outpatient Services. The outpatient program provides a comprehensive, initial evaluation by an interdisciplinary team. This one and a half day evaluation is designed to identify problems and to rule out other causes of new health problems. At the end of the evaluation, the team provides each patient with a written plan of treatment and individualized recommendations.

Each individual is treated in the context of his or her own unique struggle to remain as independent as possible in the face of new health problems and aging with a chronic disability.

Comprehensive Evaluation includes:

- \* complete history and physical exam by a physician
  
- \* musculoskeletal evaluation by a physical therapist

- \* assistive device and energy conservation evaluation by an occupational therapist
- \* social and psychological evaluation by a social worker
- \* education and preliminary interventions by team members
- \* program coordination by social worker
- \* orthotic device evaluation by an orthotist as needed
- \* laboratory, X-ray, and electrodiagnostic evaluations as indicated by individual patient needs
- \* referral to medical specialists as needed

Post-Polio Treatment Goals include:

- \* reduction of fatigue
- \* reduction of pain
- \* modification of daily energy expenditure
- \* development of a therapeutic exercise plan
- \* provision of aids, devices, and bracing to support weakened muscles
- \* development of new strategies to improve ambulation and/or wheelchair mobility

- \* workplace and job modification
  
- \* education of family and friends concerning new health problems and interventions required to treat the late effects of polio

## ***Support Groups***

The Post-Polio Program provides patient and family education and counseling through the NRH Polio Support Group. Patients are also encouraged to become involved in the local Polio Society, a community-based group that provides educational programs and support to persons who have had polio and their families.

## ***Financial Arrangements***

NRH participates in Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Medicare and is approved by most major insurance carriers and health maintenance organizations. A case manager or office manager will discuss your insurance with you at the time of the referral.

## ***The Referral Process***

Referrals for outpatient Post-Polio Program services may be made by physicians, other health professionals, community agencies, insurance companies, hospitals, family members, or oneself. To refer a patient or make an appointment call 202.877.1122.

## **Service Locations**

National Rehabilitation Hospital  
102 Irving St NW  
Washington, DC 20010  
202.877.1000

