

SHOWER CHAIR

Purpose

A shower chair is an assistive device that is helpful to ambulatory users that have difficulty standing in the shower or sitting in a tub safely. Shower chairs provide a place to sit while performing personal hygiene functions in the tub or shower. In addition, they provide an increased level of safety and independence for the user. If you have not seen a therapist or physician in regards to your mobility limitations, we recommend that you do so.

Types

Shower chairs come in two basic styles, with and without backs; some models are designed to fold up for storage. The shower chairs without backs are designed for individuals with normal sitting endurance and balance. Shower chairs with backs are designed for individuals whose balance and strength are less than normal. Shower chairs fit into most brands of tubs and showers but may not work with every brand. Make sure you read and understand all manufacturers' operating instructions.

All shower chairs have a maximum weight limit that they can support. It is important to understand the limits and capacities of your shower chair:

Weight of user (stated by user) is _____ pounds.
Maximum weight capacity of shower chair is _____ pounds.

Use

To use a shower chair, place the shower chair in the shower or tub in the appropriate position. Most shower chairs have slip-resistant rubber or plastic feet; these feet are not slip-proof and need to be kept clean and in good condition. To adjust the height of the leg extensions, push the spring buttons in and make adjustments. Adjust all four legs to the same height. When utilizing the shower chair the user should exercise care, discretion, and common sense. Always adjust your sitting position so that you sit down on the middle of the shower chair. The user must make sure that the legs of the shower chair rest firmly on the floor; if using in a tub, the legs must be on the tub floor and not resting on the curved surfaces of the side walls.

Safety

In order to ensure care and provide operator safety, make sure you follow these safety guidelines:

- Wipe up any water or slippery floor spills.
- Install grab bars, use bath mats with suction cups, and use raised toilet seats to prevent falls.
- Do not use a shower chair when taking any medications that may cause dizziness, drowsiness, and/or unsteadiness.

Safety (Continued)

The safe use of a shower chair requires it to be used as instructed, which includes the following safety precautions:

- Always check the security of the shower chair before each use, including the back support.
- Ensure that the legs are adjusted evenly and that all spring buttons protrude through the adjusting holes.
- Never leave a disoriented or physically challenged individual unattended.
- Do not use if wobbly or unstable.
- Do not use as a support device when entering or exiting a shower or tub.
- If the shower chair has arm supports, do not put full weight on the arm supports. These are assistive devices only while in the sitting position. They are not to be used during transfers in or out of the tub.

Maintenance

Shower chairs are water resistant, not waterproof. Never use a water spot remover on your shower chair; these solutions usually contain alkaline chemicals that can cause burning of the skin and are very difficult to remove. In addition, these products usually are very slippery when wet and can increase the likelihood of a fall. To keep the shower chair clean, use a non-abrasive detergent or cleanser with warm water. Make sure it is rinsed completely and is thoroughly dry before reusing. If you are using a shower chair with arm supports, make sure the handgrips are secure and not damaged. The handgrips are very important and you should inspect them regularly for movement or slippage and replace them if damaged. Check the rubber tips on the legs for rips, tears, cracks or wear. If any of these conditions exist, replace the rubber tips immediately.