



## **Your Rights to be Free from Restraint & Seclusion**

You have the right to move around freely and to be free from restraint and seclusion in psychiatric hospitals.

**Restraint** means the use of people or things to stop a person from moving. Some examples are: leather or cloth wrist/ankle/waist cuffs, posey vests, tray-chairs, mittens, bedrails, sheets, (etc.). Restraint can be used only if there is no other way to stop you from hurting yourself, hurting another person, or causing severe property damage.

**Seclusion** means that a person is put for a short time into a room, with the door closed or locked or when the person is stopped from leaving the room in any other way. Seclusion can be used only if there is no other way to stop you from hurting another person, or causing severe property damage.

### **Restraint and Seclusion CANNOT be used:**

- If you cannot sleep or sit still
- As punishment
- As a threat
- For staff convenience
- Because there is not enough staff on the unit
- Because you are upsetting other people
- Because someone thinks you are rude
- Because you are swearing
- As part of your treatment **unless you or your guardian gives permission**

### **You have the right:**

- To know why you were put in restraint or seclusion
- and what you have to do to get out
- To keep your clothes or at least have a blanket to cover yourself
- To be in a clean room
- To be in a room that is not too hot or too cold
- To use the bathroom every hour
- To get to drink every two hours

- To have breakfast, lunch or dinner at the regular time
- To have a shower or bath if you are in restraint or seclusion for more than 24 hours
- To have visitors, unless the doctor writes a special order
- To have phone calls
- To be checked by the nurse every hour
- Not to have the restraints too tight
- To be allowed to move, sit or lie down without restraints every two hours for at least 15 minutes

**You have the right to be out of restraint and seclusion when it is no longer needed.**

You were put in restraint or seclusion because staff could not find another way to stop you from hurting yourself, hurting another person, or damaging property. When you have stopped, you should be let out. You should not be kept in seclusion or restraint for some new or different reason. The nurse or doctor should check you every hour to see if you are ready. Sometimes, you might be let out for a trial period. A trial period lasts 30 minutes. If nothing happens during those 30 minutes, your order for restraint or seclusion should be stopped.

**How to Protect Your Rights**

If your rights were violated, you can complain and ask someone else to look at what happened to you and decide if it was wrong. If staff were wrong, changes can be made to make sure it does not happen again.

Hospitals have different ways to complain about restraint or seclusion. The best thing is to talk to a **Rights Advisor** or the **Patient Affairs Representative**. You can also call the State Office of Recipient Rights toll-free at 1.800.854.9090.

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