

PATIENT EDUCATION



# Toilet Safety Rails



# What Do Toilet Safety Rails Do?

**Toilet Safety Rails provide safety and assistance to individuals who have difficulty in safely lowering themselves down to the toilet and resuming a standing position. There are two types of toilet rails or toilet frames available: one type attaches to the toilet; the other is a free-standing frame with four legs that is simply placed around the toilet.**

## Models That Attach To the Toilet

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Safety rails that attach to the toilet do so through the use of a mounting bracket. This mounting bracket is held in place by the toilet seat bolts. To install, remove the two large nuts from the toilet seat bolts, then lift the seat off the toilet. Position the mounting bracket, aligning the holes in the bracket with the holes in the toilet. Replace the seat and tighten securely. On some models, provisions are made to allow a choice of width or distance between the rails when attaching them to the mounting bracket. The arms can then be leveled by adjusting the leg extensions. For non-ambulatory users, either arm can be removed allowing access to either side for lateral transfers.

It is very important that the user understands the necessity for exerting force only straight down in a vertical direction when getting up and down or transferring to and from the toilet. Any significant force on the arms in a lateral or outward direction is likely to bend or break the tubular frame resulting in a fall. Although the rails are attached to the toilet, the leverage created by their length prohibits pulling or pushing on the arms in a horizontal direction.

## Free-Standing Models

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These toilet safety frames are completely self-supporting and do not attach to the toilet. To install, simply position the frame around the toilet providing armrests on either side. The height of the arms is adjustable to the most functional level for the user by adjusting the leg extensions on each leg.

It is very important that the user understands the necessity for exerting force only straight down in a vertical direction when sitting down or returning to a standing position. Any significant force on the arms in a horizontal direction is likely to result in the frame sliding on the floor or tipping over. It is also wise to keep the force on each arm reasonably well balanced. Pushing down on only one side could tip the frame over. It should also be noted that the Free-Standing type toilet frame is usually not functional for the non-ambulatory user because it does not provide for lateral transfer.

With any Toilet Safety Rail, you should seriously consider the use of a raised toilet seat. The two products complement each other and greatly enhance safety and independence over the use of either product alone. Please call our office if you would like more information on raised toilet seats or other self-help products.





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