

## Amputee Rehabilitation: Basic Wheelchair Maintenance Tips

Here are some things to remember to keep your wheelchair working and to keep you safe when using it!

### **Know Your Wheelchair:**

- Be sure to read the owner's manual carefully - ask your local wheelchair supplier to provide you with one if you don't have it
- Read about wheelchairs
- Ask your local dealer or supplier how to maintain your wheelchair

### **Keep It Clean:**

You should do the following on a regular basis -

- Wipe off the frame of your wheelchair with a damp cloth of warm soapy water
- Wipe down the upholstery using a damp cloth or upholstery cleaner
- If you have a wheelchair cushion with a removable and washable cover, wash it in the washing machine (on gentle cycle using warm water) and hang to dry. Allow to dry completely before using
- Lubricate moving parts and wipe off any excess
- Wipe off your chair if it gets wet from the rain. Do not spray your chair with a hose or immerse it in water.
- Wipe off salt build-up in the winter.

### **Keep The Right Tools:**

Make sure you have the right tools for the job. Using the wrong tools may cause damage. Some of the tools you may need are:

- Socket set or adjustable wrench
- Allen keys
- Screwdrivers

### **Tires:**

Tires with air should be properly inflated (the suggested air pressure is located on the side of the tire). You will need a pressure gauge for this. If your tires are not inflated properly, your brakes won't work and you will have trouble wheeling your chair!

Remember to check for signs that your tire treads are wearing out and replace them if needed.

### **Brakes:**

- To prevent your wheelchair from moving when you are getting in and out of it, make sure your brakes are working well
- Your brakes may loosen over time and move away from the tire. Move the brake closer to the tire and re-tighten the bolts
- Check your tire pressure and put more air in it if the tire is soft
- Replace your tires if they are worn so your brakes will work as they should

Call your local wheelchair dealer if you are having a problem with your wheelchair that you cannot fix yourself or that you don't know how to fix.