

**IMPORTANT THINGS
TO KNOW
ABOUT YOUR
WHEELCHAIR**



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This booklet was prepared by the Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec,

The information in this booklet is neither exhaustive nor applicable in all cases, and does not have force of law.

Introduction

The Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) pays the entire cost of the wheelchair* you are entitled to receive under the Devices that Compensate for Physical Deficiencies Program.

The wheelchair is yours for as long as you need it.

However, you are responsible for your wheelchair. You must use it with care and maintain it properly. You must also see to it that it is not stolen, lost or destroyed.

You are not permitted to sell, rent, give away or modify your wheelchair or add accessories not authorized by RAMQ, for any reason whatsoever.

If you stop using it or if you die, your wheelchair must be returned to a facility with an assistive devices department. (See the list of facilities, on page 10.)

This booklet is designed to answer, as well as possible, any questions you may have about the above-mentioned matters and about other matters too.

**Your Health Insurance Card
is valid until the end of the month
in which it expires.
It's up to you to check the expiry date and, where
required, to follow the renewal procedure within
the allotted time.**

* In this booklet, the term wheelchair designates manual and powered wheelchairs, as well as positioning bases and strollers.

Your new wheelchair

To what services am I entitled when I receive my new wheelchair?

The staff of the accredited facility's assistive devices department will adjust your wheelchair for your comfort, and will provide the training needed for you to operate it properly. At the same time, they will explain how to maintain your wheelchair and will supply you with the necessary documentation. They will also answer any questions you may have.

Your responsibility

Am I responsible for my wheelchair?

Yes. You are responsible for your wheelchair and its regular maintenance.

It is therefore very important to take good care of your wheelchair to keep it clean and in good working order.

Moreover, we recommend that you notify the assistive devices department of any infectious disease or parasites in your living environment to avoid spreading them.

RAMQ does not cover the cost of repairing a wheelchair that has been used negligently: you will have to pay any such cost.

You are also required to have an insurance policy covering the loss, theft or destruction of your wheelchair. Otherwise, you are not assured of obtaining a replacement.

Contact your insurance company for details.

Keeping your wheelchair in good working order

How do I maintain my wheelchair?

The staff of your assistive devices department will explain how to maintain your wheelchair to keep it in good working order. Be sure to follow their instructions carefully and to read the documentation they give you.

You must notify your assistive devices department as quickly as possible of any sign that your wheelchair may be defective.

BATTERY CARE

A powered wheelchair's batteries must be used and recharged according to the instructions supplied with the wheelchair or affixed to it. If these instructions are not followed, batteries may quickly become damaged, resulting in breakdowns and additional costs.

Never charge your batteries more than once a day and have them checked periodically by your assistive devices department.

By whom must I have my wheelchair adjusted or repaired?

Any adjustments or repairs must be carried out only by an assistive devices department, both during and after the warranty period. (See the Assistive devices departments section, on page 10.)

Who pays the cost of adjustments and repairs?

RAMQ pays the cost of adjustments and repairs made necessary by normal wear and tear. (See the section entitled “Your responsibility,” on page 4.)

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Only an assistive devices department is allowed to modify or add accessories to your wheelchair. You are responsible for any damage resulting from unauthorized mechanical or electrical modifications. Such modifications may also be very dangerous.

Breakdowns

What do I do if my wheelchair breaks down?

Refer to the documentation you received when you took possession of your wheelchair. We recommend that you always have on hand the emergency repair phone number of the assistive devices department nearest you.

If your wheelchair breaks down while you are outside the region in which you live, contact the nearest assistive devices department. (See the Assistive devices departments section, on page 10.)

Recommendations for maintenance of your *manual* wheelchair

Maintenance (always follow the manufacturer's recommendations)

Certain maintenance tasks may require the help of a loved one or a visit to an assistive devices department.

Suggested frequency	Maintenance tasks
Every week	Check and, as required, adjust the tire pressure.
Every month	As required, take apart and clean the quick-release axles. Check the brakes. Make sure the wheelchair is comfortable. Clean the upholstery and the frame.
Every three months	Make sure the wheelchair runs in a straight line without pulling to one side. Check the cushions for wear.
Every six months	Check: (a) the condition of the wheels, drive handrims, ball bearings and axles; (b) the seat, backrest and armrests, for wear or sagging; (c) the operation of the adjustable parts (armrests, footrests, etc.).

Tire pressure front: _____ rear: _____

If problems occur

If you regularly experience pain or discomfort, or if your wheelchair shows signs of a defect or does not operate properly, make an appointment as soon as possible with your assistive devices department. (See the Assistive devices departments section, on page 10.)

Recommendations for maintenance of your *powered wheelchair*

Maintenance (always follow the manufacturer's recommendations)

Suggested frequency	Maintenance tasks
Every day	Fully charge the batteries.
Every week	Check and, as required, adjust the tire pressure.
Every month	Check the braking system. Make sure the wheelchair is comfortable. Clean the upholstery and the frame.
Every three months	Make sure the electronic conduit is in good working order. Check the cushions for wear.
Every six months	Check: (a) the condition of the wheels and axles; (b) the seat, backrest and armrests, for wear or sagging; (c) the operation of the adjustable parts (armrests, footrests, etc.). Make sure the batteries give you enough power for your regular daily use.

Tire pressure front: _____ rear: _____

As a rule, you are the person operating your powered wheelchair, using the joystick unit. If it is absolutely necessary for someone else (loved one or worker) to operate the wheelchair, that person must not use the joystick. Instead, have the person engage the power chair in **freewheel** mode to manoeuvre it manually. Refer to the user manual to find out how to engage **freewheel** mode.

If problems occur

If you regularly experience pain or discomfort, or if your wheelchair shows signs of a defect or does not operate properly, make an appointment as soon as possible with your assistive devices department. (See the Assistive devices departments section, on page 10.)

Your wheelchair is no longer suitable?

If my physical condition changes significantly or if my wheelchair becomes unusable, will it be replaced?

Your wheelchair may be replaced in either case; however, the replacement must be approved by your assistive devices department.

Of course, you will be entitled to the same services as when you received your first wheelchair. See the section entitled “Your new wheelchair,” on page 4.

Returning your wheelchair – It’s only logical!

If my current wheelchair is replaced or if I stop using it, do I have to return it?

You must return your wheelchair to an assistive devices department, complete with all components and parts, including batteries, in the case of a powered wheelchair.

RAMQ will send the accredited facility your most recent address, so that it can recover the assistive devices in your possession.

How do I return my wheelchair?

Contact the assistive devices department that supplied your wheelchair. They will give you specific instructions or assistance so that you will have no transportation costs to pay when returning your wheelchair.

If you have moved, please contact the assistive devices department nearest you. (See the Assistive devices departments section at the bottom of this page.)

Why must I return my wheelchair?

Once your wheelchair has been reconditioned, someone else will be able to use it.

Assistive devices departments

The list of Régie-accredited facilities that have an assistive devices department is available in the [Aid programs](#) section of our website.

For further information

Go to our website at

www.ramq.gouv.qc.ca

You may also obtain information by calling.

Québec

418 646-4636

Montréal

514 864-3411

Elsewhere in Québec

1 800 561-9749

Our mailing address

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Opening hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday

and Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Outside our opening hours, our office phone numbers connect you to an automated telephone information system.

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