



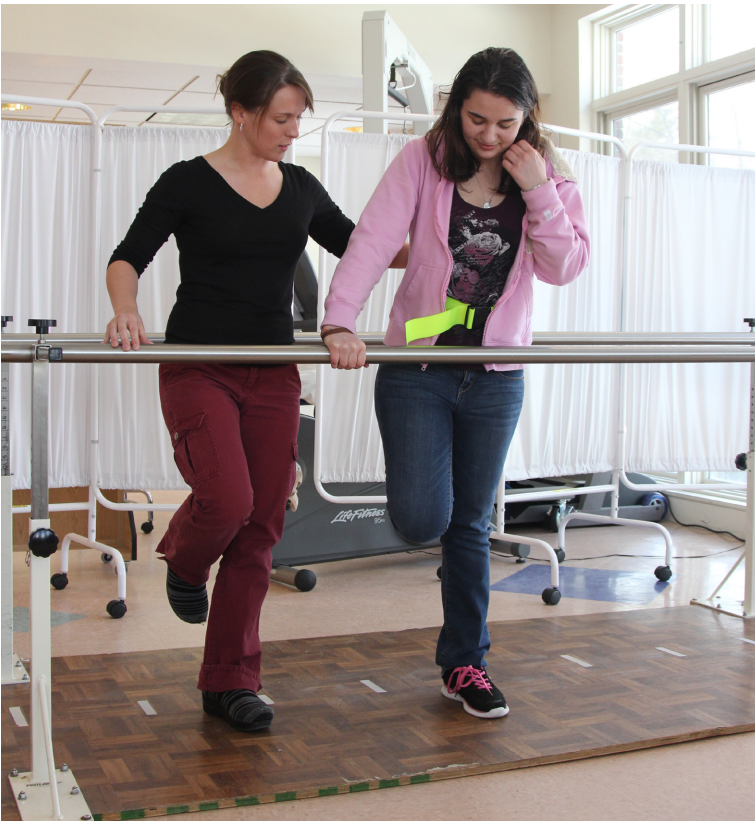
CROTCHED MOUNTAIN SPECIALTY HOSPITAL

Early Recovery Milestones Lead to Graduation with Honors: Dana's Journey to her New Life

Peace, love, life! This is how 17-year-old Dana described her feelings as she made steady recovery from a traumatic brain injury and multiple fractures sustained in a car accident in August 2012.

Admitted to Crotched Mountain Specialty Hospital in September 2012, Dana was in a minimally responsive state after stabilization at Boston Children's Hospital. Crotched Mountain Specialty Hospital assembled a team of highly skilled and experienced doctors, nurses and therapists to help Dana regain awareness and relearn cognitive and motor skills. Facing a difficult journey, Dana's physical, occupational and speech therapists helped Dana meet the challenges she was facing at every step in the process. Dana and her grandmother, Linda, responded with bravery, hard work and dedication.

Right after the accident, we weren't even sure she would survive. To see her improving was so gratifying, says Linda, Dana's grandmother and guardian. With Dana's perseverance and commitment to her recovery, she was able to return home in eight short months and graduate in June 2013 with her high school class.



As soon as weight-bearing restrictions due to her other injuries were lifted, Dana began to stand with the help of a tilt table. From there, she quickly progressed to parallel bars, a platform walker, a standard walker and then to a gait belt. Her first steps using the parallel bars were so exciting, and she never stopped making progress, whatever the challenge, said Tara Rydant, physical therapist.

Regaining Consciousness through Sensory Stimulation

Upon admission, Dana's interdisciplinary team, including an occupational therapist, physical therapist and speech-language pathologist, worked together to implement a Sensory Stimulation protocol including sound, touch and sight activities to gauge Dana's awareness and responsiveness and help bring her out of a minimally conscious state. As she emerged, the team addressed comprehension and communication related to Dana's wants and needs for activities of daily living gradually moving toward cueing and compensatory strategies to build independence.

During this process, Dana's therapists tracked her level of function in six areas using the Revised JFK Coma Recovery Scale (JFK-CRS-R): auditory, visual, motor, oro-motor/verbal, communication and arousal. In conducting an auditory test, for example, Dana's therapist might hold a ball in one hand and a spoon in the other and ask Dana to identify the spoon. The objects are then reversed and the same question asked. These kinds of exercises were done on a regular schedule to measure progress as Dana gradually became more aware.

