How Medicare defines “Homebound”

“The condition of patients who are considered Homebound should be such that there exists a normal inability to leave home and, consequently, leaving home would require a considerable and taxing effort” 1.

- The patient can not leave home without "considerable and taxing effort"
- The patient needs the aid of supportive devices such as crutches, wheelchairs, or walkers.
- The patient needs to use special transportation
- The patient needs the assistance of another person

These activities would not preclude a patient from being considered Homebound if the absences are undertaken on an infrequent basis or are of relatively short duration and do not indicate that the patient has the capacity to obtain the health care provided outside rather than in the home.

- An occasional trip to the barber / hair stylist
- A walk around the block or a drive
- Attendance at a family reunion, funeral, graduation, or other infrequent or unique events

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1 Medicare Benefit Policy Manual
Chapter 7 - Home Health Services  30.1.1 - Patient Confined to the Home
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