

What Is a Partial Hospital Program (PHP) vs. an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP)?

The levels of care, from most to least intensive

- Inpatient hospitalization: 24-hour care for safety and crisis stabilization.
- Partial Hospitalization Program (PHP): treatment during the day (usually 5-6 hours, 5 days a week), home at night.
- Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP): a few hours of treatment, usually 3-5 days a week, while you keep working or going to school.
- Standard outpatient: weekly therapy and/or psychiatry appointments.

PHP in plain terms

- A bridge between the hospital and regular life — often the next step after an inpatient stay.
- Full days of group therapy, individual sessions, and medication management.
- You sleep at home, so you practice new skills in real life every evening.

IOP in plain terms

- Structured support that fits around work, school, or family responsibilities.
- Usually evening or half-day schedules with group and individual therapy.
- A step down from PHP, or a step up when weekly therapy is not enough.

How do you know which one you need?

- You do not have to figure this out alone. A psychiatrist, therapist, or hospital intake team assesses and recommends the right level.
- Signs you may need more than weekly therapy: symptoms getting worse, trouble functioning, or feeling unsafe between appointments.
- You can ask directly: "Do you think I need a higher level of care?" That question is always allowed.
- If cost or insurance is a barrier, ask programs about sliding scales, payment plans, or state-funded options.

**If you are in
danger right
now**

Call or text **988** for the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. If there is immediate danger, call **911** or go to the nearest emergency room.

This guide is educational information only. It is not medical, psychiatric, or crisis advice. If you are thinking about hurting yourself, contact 988 or 911 now.

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