There are two basic types of folding manual wheelchairs. A “Lightweight” chair has two small wheels in the front and two big wheels in the back, so the person in the chair can propel the chair independently. A “Transport” wheelchair has four small wheels, and the person in the chair must be pushed by another person.

Considerations:

- If the person who will be in the chair is able to (and wants to) push the chair to propel it independently, a lightweight (or “ultra” lightweight) chair is likely the best option. There are certain models of these chairs that have “easy off” wheels – this feature makes it easier to store and transport the chair in the trunk of the car.
- However, if the person who will sit in the chair will not be propelling the chair themselves, a transport chair is a less expensive and significantly lighter (5-10 pounds) option.

**LIGHTWEIGHT folding manual chair.** This type of chair will have two big wheels in the back (to propel the chair) and two small wheels in the front. It needs to be light enough that it can be lifted into the car and that you are able to propel it with your arms independently. The prescription should have the word “lightweight” or “ultra lightweight” on it.

**TRANSPORT folding manual chair.** This type of chair will have four small wheels and will be lighter than a regular lightweight chair. The prescription should have the words “Transport wheelchair” on it.

**Measurements** – make sure a qualified person measures you for the chair. That usually means a PT or a seating specialist at a medical equipment store. Make sure they know how to measure correctly – usually width of your hips, length of your thighs and length of your lower legs. The front end of the seat should end a few inches from the back of your knees, and your feet should rest on the footrests with your knees at approximately 90 degrees. If your knees are too high, you will be putting unnecessary pressure on your behind and tailbone, which can cause pressure sores. If your knees are too low, there is the potential for the seat to inhibit the circulation in your legs.

**Cushion** – any chair should have a cushion, never plan to sit on the sling upholstery for a long period. Cushion should fit well in the chair and feel comfortable. It should come out of the chair quickly for easy folding.