



CAREGIVER ASSISTANCE NEWS

“CARING FOR YOU ... CARING FOR OTHERS”

Safe Transfers – Proper Lifting

Oh, My Aching Back!

As a caregiver, you may have to help the person in your care move from place to place by lifting her/him. When you learn



how to control and balance your own body, you can safely control and move another person. You can injure your back by not focusing on what you are doing, whether you are bending improperly to pick a paperclip up off the floor or

loading the washing machine. Being a caregiver puts you at even more risk for back injuries. Many occur when lifting, moving, transferring or changing the position of the one in your care. Improper movements can cause injury to the person being moved, such as abrasions to skin, strains, sprains and tears—even fractures.

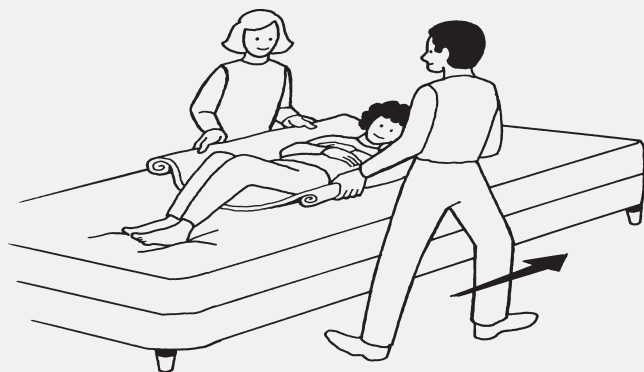
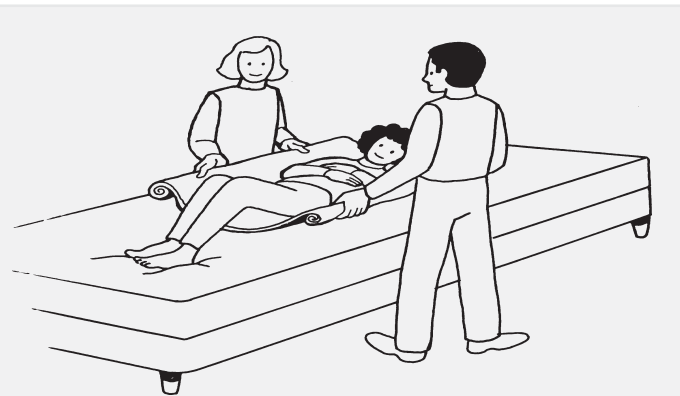
General Rules to Prevent Back Injury

Use the same procedure for all transfers, so that a routine is set up:

- Never lift more than you can comfortably handle.
- Create a base of support by standing with your feet 8–12 inches (shoulder width) apart with one foot a half step ahead of the other.
- DO NOT let your back do the heavy work: USE YOUR LEGS. (The back muscles are not your strongest muscles.)
- If the bed is low, put one foot on a foot stool. This relieves pressure on your lower back.
- Consider using a back support belt.
- If sitting for extended periods, get up every 20 minutes to give your spine relief.
- Stay fit by exercising and strengthening back and abdominal muscles.
- Gently stretch often during the day.
- Maintain a healthy weight to reduce pressure on your spine.

Using Two People to Move a Person

- Tell the person what you are going to do even if the person seems to be unconscious or not understanding.
- Remove the pillow.
- If possible, raise the bed and lock the wheels.
- Stand on either side of the bed.
- Face the head of the bed, with feet 8–12” apart, knees bent, back in a neutral position.
- Roll the sides of the draw sheet up to the person’s body.
- Grab the draw sheet with your palms up.
- Count “1-2-3” and then shift your body weight from the back to the front leg, keeping your arms and back in a locked position. Together, slide the person smoothly up the bed.
- Replace pillows under the person’s head.



The Ombudsman program can handle your concerns about areas such as elder abuse, client care, consumer rights, etc. For more information, call 1-800-582-7277.

For information about Ohio Medicaid programs or to report suspected Medicaid fraud, you may call the Ohio Medicaid Fraud Hotline at 1-800-324-8680.

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Moving a Person Up in Bed

1. Tell the person what you are going to do.
2. Lower the head of the bed to a flat position and remove the pillow—never try to move the person “uphill.”
3. If possible, raise the bed and lock the wheels.
4. Tell the person to bend their knees and brace their feet firmly against the mattress to help push.
5. Stand at the side of the bed and place one hand behind the person’s back and the other underneath the buttocks.
6. Bend your knees and keep your back in a neutral position.
7. Count “1-2-3” and have the person push with their feet and pull with their hands toward the head of the bed.
8. Replace the pillow under their head.

Note

A drawsheet—a sheet folded several times and positioned under the person to be moved in bed—prevents irritation to his skin. The sheet should be positioned from the shoulders to just below the knees.

TIP – Lighten Your Load

A too-heavy handbag can cause muscle soreness, nerve compression and back and shoulder pain. A bag should weigh no more than 10 percent of your body weight. Weigh your bag on the bathroom scale to make sure you’re not putting unnecessary strain on your body. If you have to carry a heavy load on a regular basis, consider a bag with wheels.

Source: American Chiropractic Association



Taking Care of Yourself

Changes in Attitude Relieve Stress

Here are some suggestions to help reduce your stress level:

- Learn to say no. Good boundaries improve relationships.
- Control your attitude: Don’t dwell on what you lack or what you can’t change.
- Find simple ways to have fun: Play a board game, organize family photos, listen to music you enjoy, read an engrossing book.
- Learn a time-management tool, like making a to-do list (specifically include items that you enjoy).
- Knowledge is empowering: get information about the condition of the person in your care.
- Limit coffee and caffeine and be sure to have good nutrition regularly during your day.
- Find a support system and share your feelings with someone who wants to listen.
- Keep a gratitude journal—record three new things you are grateful for every day.

Inspiration

What we have to learn to do, we learn by doing. ~Aristotle

Don’t Fall – Be Safe

Try Moving to Music – Older Adults who were unsteady on their feet and took a weekly hour-long class of movement to music maintained their balance and walked with a more regular gait.

Source: Archives of Internal Medicine.

Live Life Laughing!

Me? I take the fun out of everything. What do you do?



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