

Adaptive Equipment

Adaptive Equipment for Transfers (Gait Belts and Lifts):

(Performance of ability to assist in the use of specific adaptive equipment, such as a mechanical lifting device, if the worker will be working with clients who use the device;)

Safe Lifting Tips:

1. Think with the End in Mind: Communicate to the Senior How You Will Assist
2. Clear the Area: Move furniture and prepare the wheelchair or chair (are the brakes on or off? Any rugs or clothing in the way?)
3. Bend at Knees, Widen Stance: Maintain a wide stance with your feet apart to balance your weight on your knees, not your waist by squatting.
4. Keep the Client Close to You: place a secure hold on the client and use a gait belt when necessary
5. Stand and Pivot: By keeping the wheelchair or chair close to the bed, a pivot works best
6. Practice: Be sure you go-through-the-motions before you make the transfer
7. Gait Belts: These belts are the most commonly used tool for making safe transfers. The gait belt has a big loop buckle and is placed around the senior's waist to help steady them during a transfer

Bending at the knees allows your buttock muscles and thighs to do the work for you. Always bend forward from the hips, not the waist.

Lifting Devices: A physical therapist or occupational therapist should diagnose necessary transfer equipment and provide training for the senior and caregiver. If a senior's condition changes while you are caring for them and they begin to need more assistance with transfers, be aware that the following devices and techniques may be used.

1. Back Belts
2. Gait Belts
3. Roller Boards
4. Slide Boards
5. Draw-sheets
6. Trapeze
7. Mechanical Lifts

Proper training in using each of the devices is required, by a Care Manager or therapist.

Talk Your Senior Client Through the Process: Remember, fear of falling for a senior can make them extra anxious about a transfer. Be sure to make the senior feel at ease and confident in your ability to transfer them. Be sure you are feeling well and understand how to use the transfer equipment. If you have any doubts, don't do the transfer alone. Call your Care Manager. Better safe than sorry.