

S

SPACE

OBSTACLE FREE,
ADEQUATE SPACE TO
PERFORM TASKS.

Q: Is environment free from all hazards? Is there adequate space to perform task?

YES

Obtain equipment
Prepare area

NO

Risks: flooring, obstacles, space,
equipment, potentially confusing
wall/floor patterns, distance to be
moved, lighting, noise, temperature

A

ASSESS

ASSESS THE
PATIENT'S PHYSICAL
& MENTAL
CONDITION, CARE
NEEDS, ABILITY
TO ASSIST, &
WEIGHT-BEARING
CAPABILITY IN
RELATION TO LIFT OR
TRANSFER ACTIVITY.

Q: Is the patient cooperative?

YES

Q: Can patient assist?

FULLY

Assistance not needed

PARTIALLY

Encourage patient to assist using
a positioning aid or cues

Q: Can patient bear weight?

FULLY

Assistance not needed
Stand by for safety

PARTIALLY

Use non-powered
stand assist or full
body sling lift

NO

Use full body sling lift
& 2 or more staff

Q: Does patient have upper body extremity strength?

YES

Seated transfer aid — use gait /
transfer belt Use stand & pivot
technique with gait/transfer belt or
powered standing assist lift with 1 staff

NO

Use full body sling lift
& 2 or more staff

F

FUNCTION

Choose function:

lateral transfer, bed-to-chair, full-body lift, partial body lift, or repositioning

Apply protocol.

Use Algorithms.

***For repositioning, put bed at comfortable / safe height for staff; flat
or in Trendelenburg position to aid in gravity, with side rail down.**

***For patients with Stage III or IV pressure ulcers, avoid
shearing force. Use devices designed to minimize shearing force.**

E

EQUIPMENT

Choose lifting equipment.

**Ensure number and kinds of equipment available
for each patient and on the unit for each shift.**

< 200 pounds

Use a friction reducing device & 2-3
staff for partially assisting patients

> 200 pounds

Use a friction reducing
device & at least 3 staff

Bariatric Algorithm?

L

LIFT TEAM

Call for assistance from the lift team,
or obtain help from co-workers as needed.

I

INJURY

Be aware of the kinds of injuries you might experience
as a consequence of patient handling tasks.

Protect yourself and your patient from injury.

F

FREQUENCY

Evaluate frequency of handling tasks for your patient.

Manage your workload and time to conduct lifts and transfers safely.

Injuries occur in staff as a result of:

Force: The amount of physical effort required to perform
the task or to maintain control of the equipment

Repetition: Performing the same motion or series of motions
continually or frequently: Micro tears and Micro fractures

Awkward postures: Assuming positions that place stress on the
body, such as reaching above shoulder height, kneeling, squatting,
leaning over a bed, or twisting the torso while lifting.

T

TRAINING

Participate & complete training sessions to stay up to date & competent
to perform safe patient handling tasks, including knowledge about proper
use of equipment & devices. Ask for additional training as needed.

What can you do to protect yourself and your patients?

Workplace Walk-through

- Recognize hazards in the work place
- Perform a walk through to identify patient handling hazards
- Note hazards & inform your facility's safe patient handling committee
- Survey staff
- Get data for safe patient handling committee
- Prioritize & address high risk areas & tasks

Review Injury Data

Employees & labor representatives are entitled to information about:

- Worker injury logs, compensation data, facility injury surveillance data and accident reports
- Use this data for prioritization in your safe patient handling committee

Inventory Lift Equipment

- Determine whether patient handling needs are being met
- Assess if additional equipment is needed

Identify Barriers and Solutions

Factors to consider:

- Management support
- Budget
- Staff readiness & training
- Physical space
- Architectural plans

Being aware of these issues can help you implement safe patient handling plans more effectively.

For more information

www.washingtonsafepatienthandling.org

Washington State Nurses Association

wsna.org/topics/safe-patient-handling/
(206) 575-7979

Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission

(360) 236-4702

Washington State Department of Health

(360) 236-4700

Washington State Department of Social and Health Services

(800) 737-0617

**Protecting Nurses as
a Valuable Resource**

**Safe Lift
Decisions**

State of Washington

Department of Labor and Industries:

Safety and Health Investment Project

WSNA WASHINGTON STATE
NURSES ASSOCIATION

Washington State University

College of Nursing