

Ambulatory Falls Prevention Training

Tips on General Wheelchair Safety

Note: The age and brand of the wheelchair will dictate the type of lock, locking position, foot rest, etc.



Wheelchair “locked”



Wheelchair “unlocked”



Footplate



Footplate flips up



Footrest turns to the side



Pull out the footrest

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Tips on DOs & DON'Ts Wheelchair Transfer



DON'T

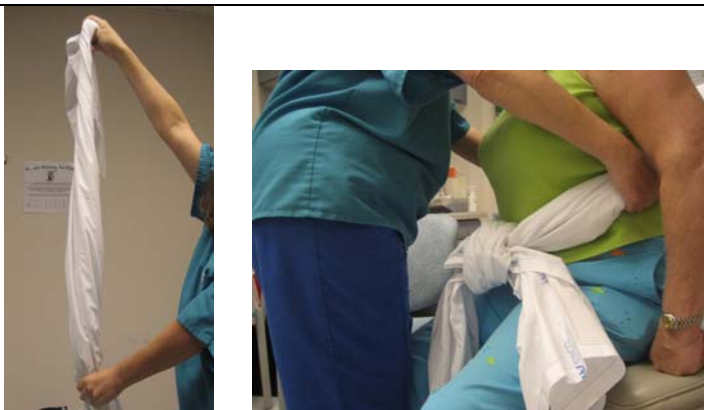
- Do not position the wheelchair too far from the exam table or the receiving surface.
- Do not position the wheelchair so that the patient faces the side or the foot of the exam table or receiving surface.

This increases the steps and turns the patient has to take.



DON'T

Do not allow or ask patient to wrap their arms around your neck.



Use of "gait belt"

Make a "gait belt" out of a sheet by twisting it and wrap it around the patient. This will create a "handle" on the patient.

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Tips on Wheelchair Transfer



Step 1

- Position the wheelchair next to the exam table with one of the arm rests at an angle to the side of the exam table.
- Lock the wheelchair on both sides.
- Try to adjust the height of the two surfaces as even as possible.
- Conduct the transfer towards patient's stronger side.

Note: The position of the wheelchair also applies for transfer between stretcher or bed.



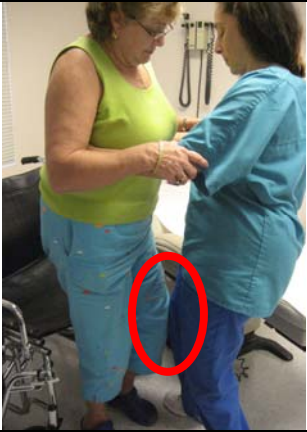
Step 2

Ask patient to scoot to the edge of the wheelchair and push on the arms of the chair.



Step 3

- Staff stands between the patient knees and places hands on back of the patient.
- Staff should stand with her knees bent while maintaining the spine in neutral position.



Step 4

- Staff assists the patient to stand. The staff's knee is blocking the patient's knee. Ask patient to "pivot" or take side step toward the exam table.
- Once the patient is standing, ask the patient to place her arms in the staff's elbows.
- If necessary, the staff needs to be prepared to block the patient's knee.



Step 5

- Ask patient to reach for the surface of the exam table.
- Staff then slowly lowers the patient to the surface.



Step 6 From exam table to wheelchair

- Raise the "back" of the exam table up so that the patient is in an upright position.
- Ask patient to scoot to the edge of the table.
- Reverse steps 1 to 5.



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Tips on Assisting a Patient to Sit up from Exam Table



Preferred Solution

Use the “back” up and down feature on the exam table if available

Raise the “back” up to bring the patient to an upright position



Alternative Solution

If “back” up and down feature is NOT available, staff should

- get close to the patient
- place one hand behind the patient back
- ask patient to place elbow on the exam table to push up
- Hold onto patient’s back and ask the patient to push



Note:

- Ask patient to turn to side to push up to sit up if space allows on the exam table.
- If hand rails are not available, place a stool with a tall handle to simulate hand rail for support.



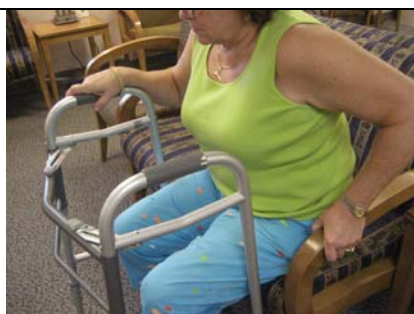
DON'T

Do not pull on patients’ arms to help them sit up from the exam table.

This can hurt both the patients and the staff.

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Tips on Assisting Patient to Stand from Sit



Providing support for patient

If a patient uses a walker or has one at home:

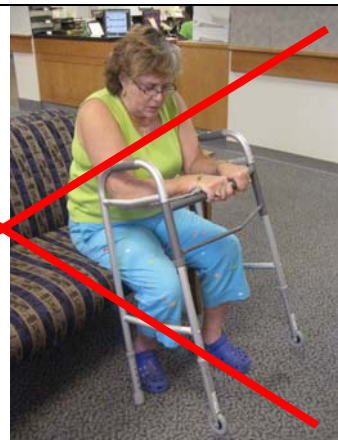
- Ask patient to place one hand on the handle of the walker and the other hand on the arm of the chair to push up to stand
- Staff should stand next to the patient with one foot placed in front of the walker's wheel

Note: The walker can be used in this same manner from an exam table, stretcher, bed, or wheelchair.



Stabilize the walker

Staff can stabilize the walker by holding it down and using one foot to block one of the legs.



DON'T

- Do not allow patient put hands on the middle of the walker's handle.
- Do not allow patient to pull back the walker.

Note: This is an indication that the patient is at increased risk to fall.

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Tips on Walking with a Patient



Use the “skater” position:

- For a patient who needs contact guard or hand held assistance and does not have a walker.
- Explain to the patient what you are going to do.
- Place one arm around their waist and hold their hand that is closest to you.
- Allow them and tell them to push down on your hand for support. This position would allow you to “catch” them and hold them close while someone gets a chair if they get weak.

Note: If they need more assistance and they did not bring a walker – please consider using a wheelchair.



Walking a Patient with a walker

- Stand next to a patient and hold onto her waist as she walks with a walker.
- If a patient allows the walker to go too far in front of her as she walks, she is at increased risk for falling.
- Help the patient walk with the walker close to her.