Tip of the Month:
Protect Yourself by Moving Mindfully

Healthcare workers like you are good at taking care of patients. Remember, it’s equally as important to take care of yourself. Here are a few tips:

1. **Breathe deeply:** Count to 5 while taking a deep breath. Repeat 5 times to calm nerves and relax muscles.

2. **Move your body as a whole and avoid reaching and twisting at the waist:**
   - Plan ahead; gather and keep frequently used items within arm’s reach
   - When changing directions, such as when hanging an IV bag, move head, shoulders, hips, and feet together

3. **Keep spine in natural position:**
   - Squat and bend at knees to reach items below the knees.
   - When sliding a patient to head of bed, bend knees and side step to head of bed.
   - To slide or turn a patient, use staggered stance, bend knees, and shift weight from one foot to the other.

4. **Stretch***: See examples below. Hold stretches for 20-30 seconds and repeat stretches 2 – 3 times.

For additional stretches and exercise options, visit Duke HR: Take Ten to “Energize Your Day”.

**Standing Back Extension:**
Stand up tall, place hands in the small of your back. Extend backward, arching your back. Look straight ahead; head should remain somewhat neutral.

**Doorway Stretch:**
Stand in the doorway, with forearms on either door post. Elbows at shoulder height. Once in position, walk slightly forward until you feel a stretch in your chest and the front of your shoulders. You may stretch one at a time.

For more information on:
- Mental and physical wellness, visit Duke HR Wellness.
- Safe patient handling and mobility, visit Duke MOVES.

*Adapted from Duke HR Exercises & Fitness, Take Ten “Energize Your Day” Activity Options: Take Ten Stretch, Activity Guide.

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