

Moving and handling people: Reducing the risk

Moving and handling people are leading causes of sprains, strains, and other musculoskeletal injuries (MSIs) among workers in health care and community social services. This bulletin focuses on ways to reduce the risk of MSI when moving or handling people.

Control measures are required

Before a person is moved or handled, the employer must ensure that:

- A risk assessment is conducted.
- Control measures (such as the devices and work practice modifications shown at right) are put in place to eliminate or minimize the MSI risk identified in the risk assessment.

Eliminating or minimizing the risk

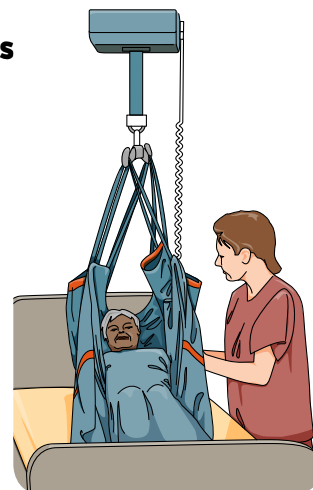
Based on the results of the risk assessment and the hierarchy of controls principle, the employer must determine the control measures that are safest for both the physically dependent person and the worker. A single control measure may not eliminate or minimize the risk. In such cases, a variety of control measures may be needed. All workers responsible for a moving or handling task must be trained in the use of the control measures.

For more information

- *Handle With Care: Patient Handling and the Application of Ergonomics (MSI) Requirements*
- OHS Regulation, sections 4.46–4.53, Ergonomics (MSI) requirements
- OHS Guideline G4.50-2, Minimizing the risk of MSI when moving a physically-dependent person

Mechanical devices

- Overhead lift
- Floor lift
- Sit-stand lift
- Powered adjustable bed
- Turning mattress
- Tilt bed
- Air-assisted device



Non-mechanical devices

- Slider sheet
- Transfer board
- Bed ladder
- Grab bar
- Triangle trapeze handle

Work practice modifications

- Implement a “no manual lift” policy.
- Evaluate care plans continuously.
- Ensure equipment is available and maintained regularly.