

OSHA Ergonomics Training Module

Ergonomic disorders are the most prevalent injuries in the workplace, costing employers an estimated \$4.5 billion per year.

Ergonomics - is the science of adapting equipment, procedures and surroundings to people. Using ergonomics can help you do your job in ways that are safer, easier, and smarter.

When work is conducted with awkward and or stressful postures , muscles, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage or pinal discs can be damaged, resulting in musculoskeletal disorders.

Manual Lifting Criteria

- Never lift more than you are comfortable with. Everyone is different and the amount you can lift depends on size and strength.
- Minimize the distance between the load and your body. Don't reach out in front of your body while lifting. Keep the load close to your torso.
- Lift loads from knuckle height rather than from floor level.
- When you have to lift from knuckle height, keep your back straight, your knees bent, and lift with your legs.
- Keep the travel distance with the lift to less than 10 feet.
- Minimize twisting at the waist. Turn to pivot the entire body.
- Avoid jerking by using smooth , even motions.
- Keep your feet apart for a stable base.

When lifting or moving a patient:

- Assess the situation
- Know the patient's limitations.
- What is his/her condition? Are there any IV tubes, vent tubes, feeding tubes, etc. to consider?
- Is he/she strong or flexible enough to help?
- How much does he/she weigh? Can the patient bear any of his/her weight?
- What are the patient's mental abilities? Are these affected by medications? Can he/she follow directions?
- Does the patient have proper foot wear?
- Are there any mechanical devices needed/available?
 - Know your abilities and limitations. Have you been properly trained?
 - Are you wearing proper footwear?
 - Do you know how to use all of the equipment necessary for the move?
 - Adjust the bed
 - Raise or lower it close to your center of gravity (a few inches below your waist).

- Position the head of bed. Depending on the move, you may need to lower it flat or raise it to its full, upright position.
 - Lock the wheels
 - Position the equipment.
 - Place it as close to the patient as possible.
 - Align it properly. For example, a wheelchair should be placed either parallel or at a 45 degree angle to the bed depending on the type of move.
 - Lock the wheels.
 - Could required PPE affect the move? (gloves, masks, etc. can affect your grip and vision).
- Be sure you have a clear path. Be sure to check for electrical cords, loose carpeting, slippery floors, obstacles, sharp edges, poor lighting and blind spots.

Some Common Techniques:

- **Helping a patient sit up from bed**
 - Position the patient on his or her side, facing you. Raise the head of the bed.
 - Place one of your arms under the patient's shoulders and your other arm over the thighs.
 - Draw the patient's legs over the edge of the bed. At the same time, lift the patient's upper body, helping him or her to a sitting position.
 - Encourage the patient to help by using his/her legs and arms.
- **Helping a sitting patient from the bed to a chair**
 - Make sure the wheels on the bed are locked.
 - If you are moving the patient to a wheelchair, lock the wheels and move the footrests out of the way.
 - Lower the bed until the patient's feet rest flat on the floor. Face the patient. Use a transport belt, if needed or required.
 - Bend your knees and line them up with the patient's knees. Hold the patient by the belt or use an approved hold.
 - Hold the patient close and lift him/her to a sitting position, using a rocking motion. Have the patient support as much of his/her weight as possible.
 - Turn by moving your feet, helping the patient do the same.
 - Have the patient use the chair's armrests for support. Gently help lower him/her
- **Using a lift to move a patient**
 - Use these for a patient who is too heavy or unable to help with a move. They can be used for many types of transfers.
 - Follow manufacturer's instructions and PHI procedure manual.

Report any Hazards, Mishaps, or Injuries

- Report any incident that results in pain.

- If a task causes fatigue, stress or discomfort, tell your supervisor. This can help catch a problem before it gets worse or causes an injury.
- Get any needed medical help.
- Follow your healthcare provider's instructions.
- Reporting can help you and others!

It can help:

- Prevent you from getting seriously hurt.
- Prevent you from losing work time.
- Prevent others from getting hurt.