



## Safe Patient Handling to Minimize Injury Risks



Caring for patients can be physically demanding. The work requires lots of manual patient lifting, boosting and holding — practices that are a common source of injury to health care workers. Here are some guidelines for Safe Patient Handling (SPH) to reduce the risk of injuries.

### Use SPH Equipment When Possible

KP encourages the use of powered or non-powered SPH equipment as much as possible, instead of manual lifting and/or transfer of patients. Equipment includes:

- » Slide sheets
- » Air-assisted lateral transfer or repositioning devices
- » Portable and ceiling-mounted lifts
- » Sit-to-Stand aids or lifts
- » Transport equipment (wheelchairs, stretchers, motorized beds)

SPH equipment must be readily accessible (not blocked). Staff required should be trained in its proper use.

### When Manual Lifting Is Required

You can protect yourself and your patients by:

- » Teaming up with other caregivers to minimize the load on one person
- » Using good body mechanics (lifting with legs, not back; no leaning or twisting)
- » Getting the patient to help during transfers or repositioning, when possible
- » Clearing as much space as is needed for good body mechanics and proper use of SPH aids
- » Communicating with patients and colleagues so everyone understands when to move ('Ready. Set. Go!')
- » Calling for a safety stop if something isn't right

### TEAM ACTIVITY

Here are ways your team can assess and minimize risks associated with patient handling:



Discuss your facility's Safe Patient Handling policies and procedures at a team huddle



Use huddles to identify and coordinate care of patients who require assistance with mobility



Conduct safety observations when staff members turn or lift patients to promote safety and minimize injury risks



Check out the [National Workplace Safety — Safe Patient Handling site](#) for more tools and resources on Safe Patient Handling practices.

### SAMPLE SMARTIE GOAL

By October 31, 2025, our UBT will develop a plan to reduce manual lifting incidents by 25% (from 8 to 6, for example) by December 31, 2025. We will ensure inclusive participation by gathering input from all shifts and promote equity by providing tailored training and resources based on staff experience and ability.

