

Lifting techniques

"Sitting down, standing up, getting into and out of bed"

are the basic movements we perform everyday

The following clip gives you a basic idea on assisting elders in everyday life

Let us see how we can help the mobility-impaired elder

Before we begin

let us familiarise ourselves with the "Eight Principles of Lifting and Transfer"

These Eight Principles are useful for helping the elder to transfer between positions

They are also useful for using assistive devices as well as other daily activities in lifting heavy objects

They can reduce the risk of injury

You can apply them flexibly to suit individual situations

The first principle is to plan ahead and be prepared

Before lifting an elder we should first analyse his condition

our own ability and the environment

Then choose the best lifting method and assistive device accordingly

"In addition, carers should wear appropriate clothing"

Remove accessories that might hinder lifting

Such as watch or jewellery

"Before lifting, observe the physical condition of the elder"

"If he has an unhealed fracture, joint dislocation or severe pain"

take extra care

Do not exert force on these areas

"If any tube is attached, make sure it does not get detached"

If there is a urine bag

keep it in a proper position

Keep it below the bladder to avoid urine backflow

Help the elder to sit properly

"Tidy up his clothes, socks and shoes"

so that you can lift him easily

Have you ever noticed that when the elder

is sitting with feet placing out in front too much

or with the body leaning backward

It is more difficult for him to stand up?

"In contrast, when sitting with knees bent directly above the toes"
and the body leaning forward while standing up
"that means, bend the knees a little"
and shift the body weight slightly forward
that makes a great difference
He can stand up more easily
"As for the environment, remove all obstacles in your way"
The floor must be dry and make sure the room is well-lit
Get all necessary equipment ready
"For example, place the wheelchair at a suitable angle, location and
place"
"Remember, advance preparations are essential"
And don't forget to lock the wheels of the wheelchair
This way the whole transferring and lifting process will be safer
more efficient and smoother
Principle Two is to explain to the elder
and give guidance so that she can cooperate
"First of all, explain to the elder and give her guidance"
so that she understands the process and cooperates
Sometimes when you are helping the elder to transfer
he would hold on to the bed or chair
This is because there is no consensus
This makes transfer more difficult
It is also important
to encourage the elder to take an active part in the transfer process
because his participation will reduce the carer's load
"Most importantly, this gives the elder a chance to use his body"
so as to keep it active and delay degeneration
Principle Three is correct posture
When lifting the elder
keep your back straight
tighten up the abdomen and bend your knees
Keep your back straight
to reduce the stress on your back
Tighten up the abdomen to hold your abdomen and back muscles firm
and protect your back
Bending the knees enables you to stand firmly
"and make use of the lower limbs, so as to reduce the risk of back injury"

Principle Four is to hold firmly

The elder should feel comfortable when you hold her firmly
and it can avoid falls

How should you hold the elder firmly so it is safer for both of you
and reduces the stress on your joints?

The answer is the carer should support the elder with larger joints
and stronger body parts

Let us take a carer's upper limbs as an example

As the forearms are stronger than the wrists
you should use the forearms to provide support

"Besides, the carer should not over-bend her joints"
or she might over-load them

Principle Five is to stay close to the elder

When lifting an heavy object

according to the leverage principle

the longer the distance between the object and your body
the heavier it feels

"Likewise, when lifting an elder"

the carer should get as close to him as possible

Because a longer lifting distance
makes the job more strenuous

"and would add extra load to the body, particularly the back"

"Also, by staying close to the elder"

the carer can avoid overstretching her limbs

Principle Six

Point one foot towards the destination and lift with the strength of lower
limbs

When the carer points one foot towards the destination

"for example, a wheelchair"

she can shift the weight of the elder more smoothly and effectively
you should propel by using the lower limbs

which are the strongest muscles

It can reduce the load on your back and upper limbs

Principle Seven is to give command by one carer

If the elder can cooperate with the carers during transfer
or if two or more helpers are needed for the transfer

because the elder is too heavy or too weak

One of the carers should give the command

It facilitates cooperation
so that the risk of injury can be reduced

When giving command

should carers start the transfer motion after the counting of three?
or at the count of three?

Make sure you have clear understanding beforehand

Principle Eight : Use assistive devices

When situation allows

use appropriate assistive devices

to reduce the load on the carer

But no matter what kind of assistive device you use

you should always adopt the lifting principles mentioned above flexibly