

Level ground walking, home environment and related assistive devices

Suitable chair

Sitting down and standing up are usual activities in daily life

You may not be aware of the important role

of a chair in this process

A suitable chair can enable the elder to stand up safely by himself

increase independence and reduce reliance on carers

"A suitable chair, apart from steadying the posture"

can provide support to elders with physical weakness

during the process of lifting and transfer and

reduce the physical stress on carers

The choice of a chair also affects safety during transfer

"Thus, we have to pay attention"

when we select the chair for elders

consult an occupational therapist before purchasing any assistive devices

Round stool is a common piece of home furniture

but it's problems are instability and no back support

So it is not suitable for elders

Sofa is also a common furniture at home

but we often slump down in it

It is too soft and the seat is too low

making it difficult for elders to stand up

Mahogany chair is popular in traditional families

They are stable and durable

but they are often too low or too high

"That makes it difficult for the elders to stand up, they may even fall"

Folding chair can be easily stowed

but there is a risk of tipping over so it is not suitable for elders

An ordinary chair with backrest provides back support

but there is no armrest to help the elder to stand up or sit down

Office chairs on castors can provide adequate back support

Seat height can be adjusted and there are armrests

"However, they are unstable"

When standing up or sitting down

"the office chair will move, that would increase the risk of fall"

Some elders like to sit on low stools

They are unstable and lack back support

Their seats are too low and it is difficult for the elder to stand up or sit down

"Rattan chairs have backrest for back support, and armrests" but their seats often cave in after long-term use and makes it difficult for the elder to stand up or sit down

How to select a suitable chair?

Please note the following points:

"Firstly, the legs of chair must be stable"

Do not use chair on castors

Regarding the appropriate seat height

the knees should be able to bend 90-degree angle when seated and the feet can be placed flat on the floor

The seat surface must not be too slippery or too soft

Pay attention to the seat width

When seated in the centre

there should be 1-inch space on either side of the buttocks

There should be armrests on both sides

so as to support the entire forearm

and assist standing up or sitting down

The ideal back rest forms a 100-degree angle with the seat

For elders with physical weakness

a high-back chair with table top is more suitable

Choose chairs according to the needs and ability of the elder and match with the living environment