

Preventing Overuse Injuries in Adult Family Homes

What is an overuse injury?

Overuse injuries are wear and tear injuries to the muscle and joint system due to repeated use over a long period of time. They could also occur from lifting something extremely heavy, once.



Our main goal is to prevent injuries.

Residents and caregivers are dependent upon each other. Preventing overuse injuries helps caregivers, helps residents, and helps Adult Family Home (AFH) owners.

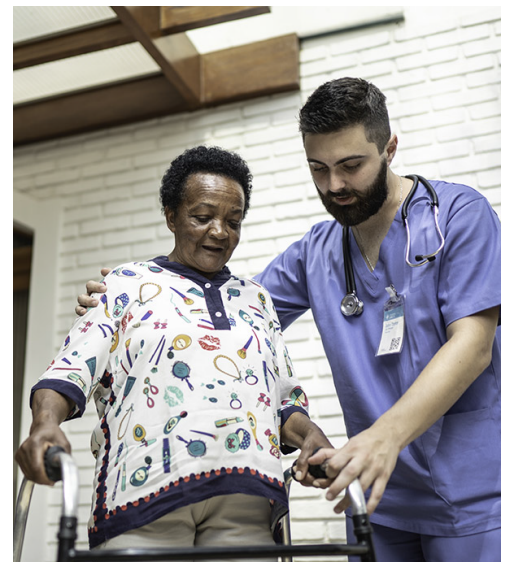
Why are caregivers at risk for overuse injuries?

Caregivers lift, bend, and twist when doing resident handling activities such as:

- Manual transfers – transferring a resident using only a caregiver's own muscle effort
- Repositioning or boosting in bed
- Toileting and peri-care (washing private parts)
- Bathing

When is it OK for a caregiver to do a manual transfer?

ONLY if you use less than 35 pounds of lifting effort. Compare your lifting effort to lifting a 35 pound box or sack. **If more effort is needed, tell a clinician or supervisor.**



How much can your client/resident do?

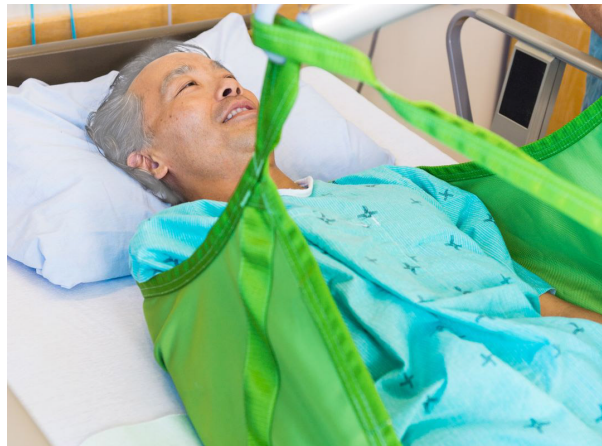
Please visit <https://lni.wa.gov/safety-health/docs/TransferClientsSafely.pdf> to find a quick ability screen and a guidance table. Start with the resident's ability to help you see what they may need. It's best to do a quick ability screen before starting every transfer.

Equipment options to make patient transfers safer and easier:

- Standing aids
- Sit-to-stand devices
- Total body lifts
- Small footprint multi-use lift equipment

Equipment options to make patient boosting in bed safer and easier:

- Low-friction slide sheets
- Total body lifts



Ways to reduce overuse injuries:

- Do a quick ability screen before each transfer
- Include caregiver effort in assessments and care plans
- Train caregivers to recognize 35 lbs. of effort with a comparison test
- Train caregivers to report resident's transfer ability changes, immediately
- Get and use appropriate equipment
- Set limits as to who the Adult Family Home accepts as residents and plan for future changes as patients decline in function due to age or illness
- Remodel bathrooms so there's enough room for safe transfers with equipment based on the range of residents that your Adult Family Home serves



Resources

[Client Transfers: Preventing sprains, strains, and overuse injuries in adult family homes - YouTube](#)

[Client transfer \(wa.gov\)](#)

[How to keep transfers safe - YouTube](#)