

Lifts and Transfers - General Information

Goal: Students will be assisted throughout the day in changing their positions to support their comfort and function and to meet their care needs in a manner that maximizes their ability and is safe for both the student and the caregiver.

What to consider:

- Know your individual's abilities, your own abilities, and the environment
- Understand the principles of proper body mechanics
- There are different transfers and lifts, such as:
 - Supervised/minimal assist transfer
 - Standing pivot transfers
 - Lateral transfer
 - Supervised/minimal assist transfer
 - Standing pivot transfers
 - Lateral transfer

Principles of Body Mechanics

- Maintain a wide base of support
- Bend at your knees, not your back
- Use your large leg muscles
- Position the student close to your body
- Move your feet, avoid twisting
- An erect spine is divine
- Blow before you go (exhale before lifting)

Steps to follow:

- Plan the transfer/lift prior to starting
- Set up the environment and prepare yourself, the individual and the person assisting you
- Always have someone watching the individual's face for signs of distress
- Keep the individual's lap belt on until set up is complete and transfer or lift is ready to occur
- Always maintain communication with the individual and the person assisting you before, during and after the transfer/lift
- Apply the principles of proper body mechanics throughout the transfer/lift. Repeated stresses over time will lead to injury
- Ensure the individual is well positioned, positioning belts and supports are in place, and the individual is comfortable.

The recommendations listed above highlight generalized suggestions for promoting safety with lifts and transfers. These suggestions are not individualized, and should you have any questions or notice changes in the individual's abilities, needs, or environment that may impact the safety of the individual or yourself, reach out to your OT/PT for advice.