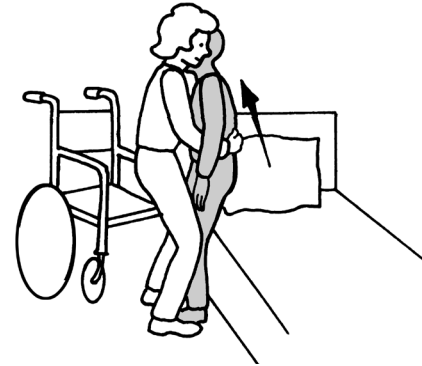


may improve his balance. Remember, before starting any type of exercise routine, get advice from your physician. Start slowly with only moderate effort. Give him or her time to build strength and stamina. Any amount of exercise helps reduce the risk of falls.

Back Safety - Proper Lifting and Moving

Back injuries are among the most common injuries in caregiving. But sometimes as a caregiver, you will have to help the person in your care move to a chair or be asked to pick up a heavy object. Though this seems like a simple maneuver, it is very easy to be injured doing this and left unable to perform your caregiving duties. A little attention to the safest way to move your body—and the person in your care—will keep you from unnecessary injury. Most muscle strain injuries to both the caregiver and care receiver are preventable if you follow some simple rules.



Body Mechanics

The proper use of our bodies is called *body mechanics*. It involves standing and moving in ways that prevent injury, avoid fatigue, and make the best use of strength. When you learn how to move, control and balance *your* own body, it's easier to control and help or move another person.

General Rules

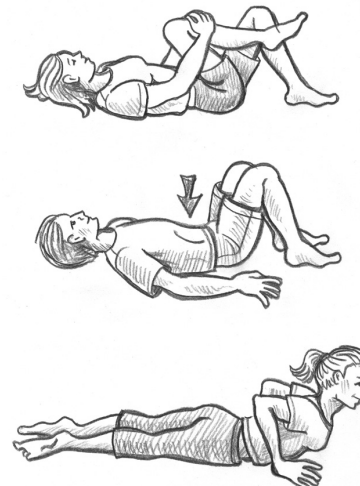
The following hints will help you use proper body mechanics and be safe. However, caregivers should seek training from a physical therapist to reduce the risk of injury.

- ➔ Only lift as much as you can comfortably handle.
- ➔ Always let the person you are helping know what you are going to do.
- ➔ To create a base of support, stand with your feet 8"–12" apart with one foot a half step ahead of the other.
- ➔ Bend your knees slightly.
- ➔ Keep your spine in a neutral (normal arched curve, not stiff) position while lifting.
- ➔ USE YOUR LEGS instead of your back to do most of the work—leg muscles are stronger than back muscles.
- ➔ If you can adjust the bed, keep the top at about waist level. If it is low or you are tall, put one foot on a footstool to relieve pressure on your lower back.

Taking Care of Yourself— Preventing Back & Neck Pain

Excess weight puts extra stress on back and stomach muscles and on joints. One pound of extra weight puts four extra pounds of stress on knee joints. To prevent injuries to yourself, get plenty of rest and maintain:

- ✓ Good nutrition.
 - ✓ Physical fitness.
 - ✓ Good body mechanics.
 - ✓ A stress management program such as daily meditation.
 - ✓ A stretching routine before you lift. It gets blood flowing to the muscles as well as to the discs between the vertebrae in the spine.
 - ✓ A back strengthening exercise program.
- Do not smoke.** Both smoke and nicotine cause your spine to age faster than normal.



Inspiration
How to apologize: quickly, specifically, sincerely.

Live Life Laughing!

Don't worry, a lot of people cry when they cut an onion. The trick is not to form an emotional bond.



Memory Care - Habits

Remember the person's typical habits, likes, and dislikes. Give him the right to say "no" when he doesn't feel like taking a bath or doing something else you ask him to do. If possible, try again later, rather than forcing the issue just because it is a convenient time for you. And sometimes you may need to just let the activity go. Just let it go.