

UNSAFE PATIENT HANDLING

Lifting, transferring, repositioning and moving patients without using proper techniques or handling equipment can cause musculoskeletal injury (e.g., back injury and chronic back pain).



Key facts

- ✓ Up to 72% of nurses are suffering from non-specific chronic low back pain.
- ✓ Low back pain is associated with health workers' absenteeism, reduced efficiency, increased economic burden, decreased quality of life, and burnout.

Preventive measures:

- ✓ Identify and assess occupational hazards related to patient handling.
- ✓ Avoid lifting or use fewer and more efficient lifting operations.
- ✓ Plan tasks carefully to reduce ergonomic stress and strains.
- ✓ Use lifting aids and mechanical devices for patient handling to prevent unnecessary lifting.
- ✓ In absence of lifting aids, ensure that at least two workers lift the patient.
- ✓ Provide training on safe patient handling.
- ✓ Adjust the layout of working areas to ensure enough space for safe transfers.
- ✓ Install steps or ramps at the rear of the ambulance for easy transportation.

Source:

<https://www.who.int/tools/occupational-hazards-in-health-sector/unsafe-patient-handling>

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