
What is a patient care lift?

A patient care lift is a device for lifting and moving patients who cannot move themselves. It helps to reduce the risk of injury to the patient and the person moving the patient.

How does it work?

The lift is hydraulic (like a car jack for changing a flat tire) or electric. A lift has 2 parts – a cloth sling and a metal lift.

- The cloth sling holds your child during the transfer.
- The lift is made of:
 - A lifting bar.
 - A pump handle or push button control.
 - A U-base with 4 wheels.

How do I use a patient care lift to move my child?

Your physical therapist (PT) will teach you how to use the lift for your child. To help keep yourself and your child safe, be sure to follow the instructions with care. Some guidelines for moving your child from a bed into a wheelchair include:

1. Plan your transfer first. Clear the pathway, and have everything you need in place. **Put the brakes on the bed and the wheelchair.**
2. Place the sling under your child:
 - Roll your child onto their side.
 - Put the sling behind their back, and roll them into the sling. Make sure your child is in the middle of the sling. The sling should be smooth – no wrinkles.
 - Pull the leg loops forward and under your child's thigh. Cross the loops.
3. Attach the lift to the sling:
 - Roll the lift base under the bed. **Set the base so the legs are at their widest position.** This helps the lift to be more stable.
 - Attach the lift to the sling. Make sure the ends of the hooks are facing away from your child.
 - Raise your child slowly. Use the hand pump if the lift is manual or the push button control if the lift is electric.
 - Raise your child until their bottom is just above the mattress. They should be in a seated position.

In case of an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department right away.

Patient care lift, continued

4. Move your child:

- **Make sure the wheelchair brakes are on.**
- Hold the lift handles, and steer the lift away from the bed. Do NOT turn your child; only turn the lift. Move the U-base from under the bed to under the wheelchair.
- Make sure your child is positioned over the wheelchair.
- Release the knob or pin on the lift if manual or push down the button if electric. Slowly lower your child into the wheelchair. Guide your child to make sure their bottom is all the way back in the wheelchair.
- Place the wheelchair seat belt on your child before you unattach the sling from the lift.

This teaching sheet contains general information only. Talk with your child's doctor or a member of your child's healthcare team about specific care of your child.

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