

HOW TO MOVE SMART

Be aware that just knowing good technique is not enough. Nurses should avoid lifting when possible by encouraging patient independence when appropriate and/or using assist equipment.

1. Know your own limits and do not exceed them: get help whenever possible
2. Keep your ears, shoulders, and hips in a straight line when standing, sitting, or lifting while keeping your abdominal muscles contracted
3. Always provide stability before lifting by keeping at least 1 heel down when lifting and using a wide balanced stance so you can lift between and not in front of your knees
4. Lift with your thigh muscles by hinging at the hips (this will also keep your ears, shoulders, and hips in a straight line so you do not bend your back while lifting)
5. Keep everything lifted close to you from the beginning to the end of the lift
6. Get close to your level of work or bring the level of your work close to you
7. Face your work and pivot with your feet so you do not twist your low back
8. Push whenever possible rather than pull (though when turning a person in bed, roll the person towards you) – if you do pull, keep the load close at your side to avoid twisting

Here are some other things you can do to help your back:

1. Place 1 foot forward or supported to take pressure off low back when standing
2. Sit with knees higher than hips and your lower hips against the back of the chair or couch
3. Stretch daily
4. Strengthen* Arm, Leg, Back, and Abdominal muscles 2-3 times a week
5. Aerobic Exercise* 3-5 times a week (being active on your job does not count as an aerobic exercise!)

*Check with your doctor before beginning an exercise program