

# Safe Patient Handling:

Reducing Risk Through  
Evidence Based Interventions

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## Disclaimers

- Susan L. Salsbury BS, OTR/L, CDMS, CSPHP is on the Speaker Bureau for Sage, now part of Stryker.

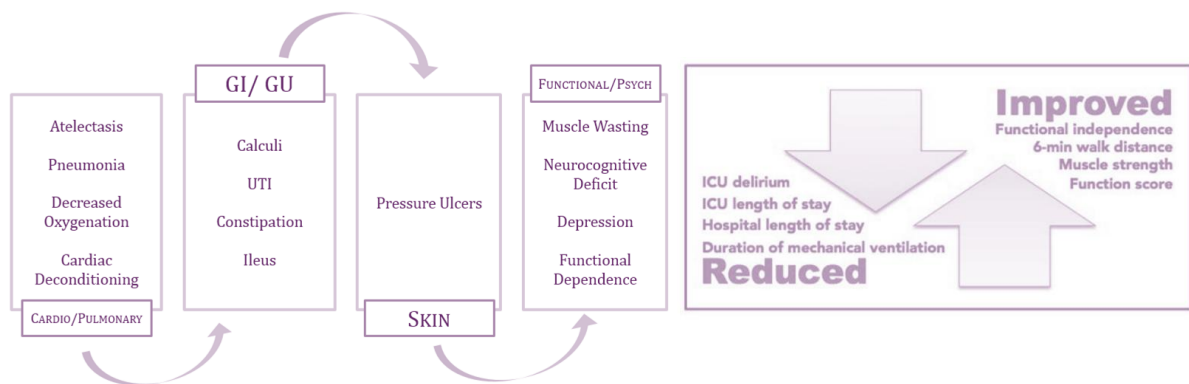
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## Objectives

1. Identify risk factors for Patient Handling Injuries
2. Identify strategies and equipment for safe patient handling
3. Observe hands-on demonstrations for providing best care while protecting the vulnerable caregiver.

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## The science of patient movement: why is it important?



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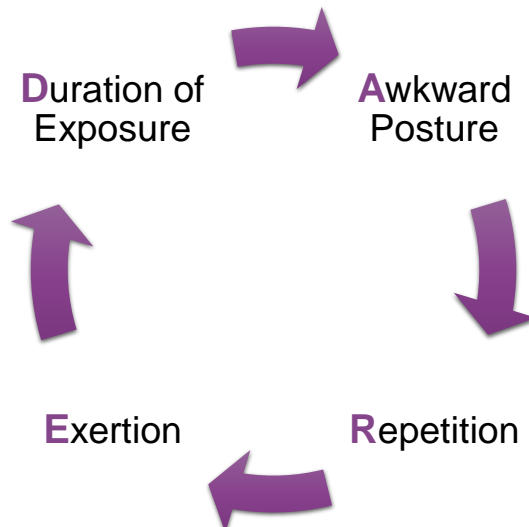
## Physiology of HCW injury

- Repetitive tasks
- Awkward postures
- Weights exceeding safe limits for lifting/moving
- Improper/absence of equipment

US Department of Veteran's Affairs, VISN 8 Patient Safety Center of Inquiry Safe Patient Handling and Movement. Biomechanics of Patient Lifting. [http://www.visn8.va.gov/patientsafetycenter/safepatienthandling/biomechanicsofpatientlifting\\_marras.pdf](http://www.visn8.va.gov/patientsafetycenter/safepatienthandling/biomechanicsofpatientlifting_marras.pdf)

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## DARE yourself to think before you lift: ergonomic risk factors for patient handling injuries



(Fragala et al., 2016)

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## Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WMSDs)

- Injuries to muscles, nerves, tendons, joints, cartilage and intervertebral discs
- Work environment contributes to the condition
- Condition made worse or persists due to work condition
- WMSDs are not slips, trips or falls



[www.dlt.gov]

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## Significance of the problem

- Nursing ranks among the top 10 most hazardous occupations for injuries to muscles and joints<sup>1</sup>
- In the U.S., musculoskeletal disorders accounted for 32% of all occupational injuries and illness cases in 2014<sup>1</sup>
- Direct and indirect costs associated with back injuries to healthcare workers have been estimated to be \$20 billion annually<sup>2</sup>

1. U.S. Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015). Nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work [Press release]. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/osh2.pdf>

2. U.S. Department of Labor/Occupational Safety and Health Administration. (n.d.). Safe patient handling. Safety and health topics. Retrieved from <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/healthcarefacilities/safepatienthandling.html>

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## High-Risk Tasks

- Transferring (wheelchair, stretcher, bed)
- Lifting (chair, bed, floor)
- Repositioning (up in bed, lateral, in chair)
- Bathing in bed
- Making occupied bed
- Applying anti-embolism stockings
- Feeding patients
- Standing patient/ambulation
- Applying/changing dressings
- Placing x-ray cassette behind patient

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## Patient handling tasks are high risk activities due to:

- Amount of weight lifted
- Awkwardness and unpredictable nature of the load being moved or lifted (patient)
- Sustained awkward positions used when providing nursing care, such as bending over beds or chairs while back is flexed
- Repetitive lifting and repositioning
- Excessive pushing and pulling

Nelson, A., & Baptiste, A. S. (2004). Evidence-based practices for safe patient handling and movement. *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*, 9(3). Retrieved from <http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ANAMarketplace/ANAPeriodicals/OJIN/TableofContents/Volume92004/No3Sept04/EvidenceBasedPractices.aspx>

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## Solution Strategies

- Eliminate the need to perform the high risk activity
- Redesign the task to eliminate components of the high risk task
- Minimize the frequency of the high risk task
- Make optimum use of equipment features to facilitate
- Reduce risk through application of an aiding device

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## Safety culture: Patient and Healthcare Worker



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