

Guideline E3:

Moving and supporting a person's limb/s

Remember - carers are twice as likely as people in most other professions to injure their backs through moving and handling activities. To help minimise these risks always consider the following guidance before moving or supporting a person's limb/s:

Self help	Can the activity be avoided i.e. can the person move their limb/s independently? It may be possible to encourage the person to use a stronger limb to move a weaker one.
Ergonomics	Consider using equipment to move or support a limb/s e.g. a leg raiser for those with arm strength, a powered leg raiser for those unable to lift their own legs. A handling sling under the legs reduces the distance carers have to reach down to lift legs. Limb supports should be used where limbs require support for longer periods e.g. plastering, bandaging. For very heavy limbs a hoist should be considered.
Communication	Check how the person wishes to be assisted and consult their handling plan.
Safety	Check the environment is safe e.g. clear and free from obstructions

Preparation

1. Check the handling plan for specific instructions e.g. how to deal with painful areas, movements that trigger or inhibit spasm, the number of carers required etc.
2. Ensure that there is sufficient space and that the person is at a suitable height for the carer to work in safe postures

Providing assistance

1. Position close to the limb/s e.g. on the near side of the bed/chair and where necessary place a knee on the bed to position close.
2. Use open palm holds to move and position limb/s.
3. Avoid gripping holds.
4. Avoid lifting limbs wherever possible by sliding or rolling them instead.

Warning

- Lifting legs from near floor level is potentially hazardous and should be avoided where possible.
- Do not try to support a person's limb and at the same time apply dressings or adjust garments.
- Avoid supporting limbs for extended periods.