

# Nursing Assistants: Protect Yourself and Your Patients—Use a Lift

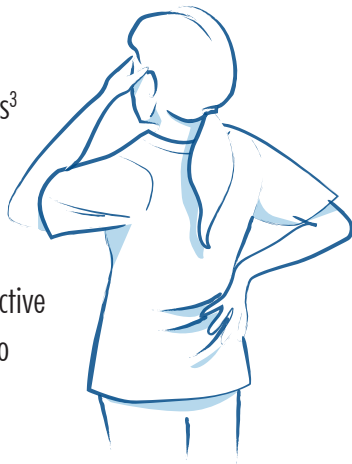
Nursing assistants rank #1 in musculoskeletal disorders that required days away from work reported in 2011, with **over 25,000 reported injuries**.<sup>1,2</sup>

More than **6X** as high as the average for all occupations

The incidence rate of musculoskeletal disorders in nursing assistants is **239.2 per 10,000 full-time workers** and the median days away from work is **6**.<sup>1,2</sup>

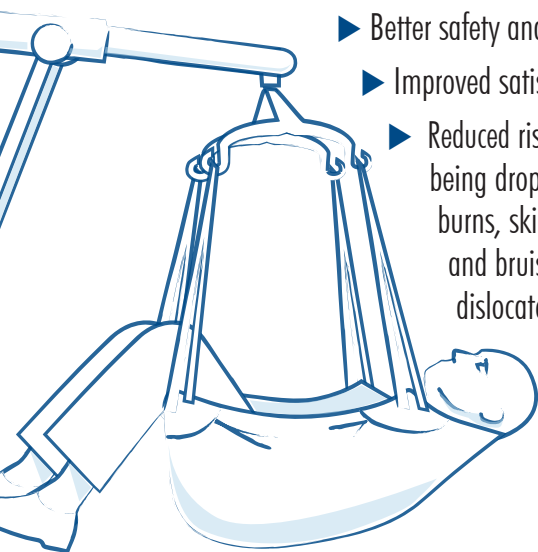
The **consequences** of musculoskeletal injuries<sup>3</sup>

- ▶ Chronic pain
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Inability to work
- ▶ May be less productive
- ▶ More susceptible to additional injury

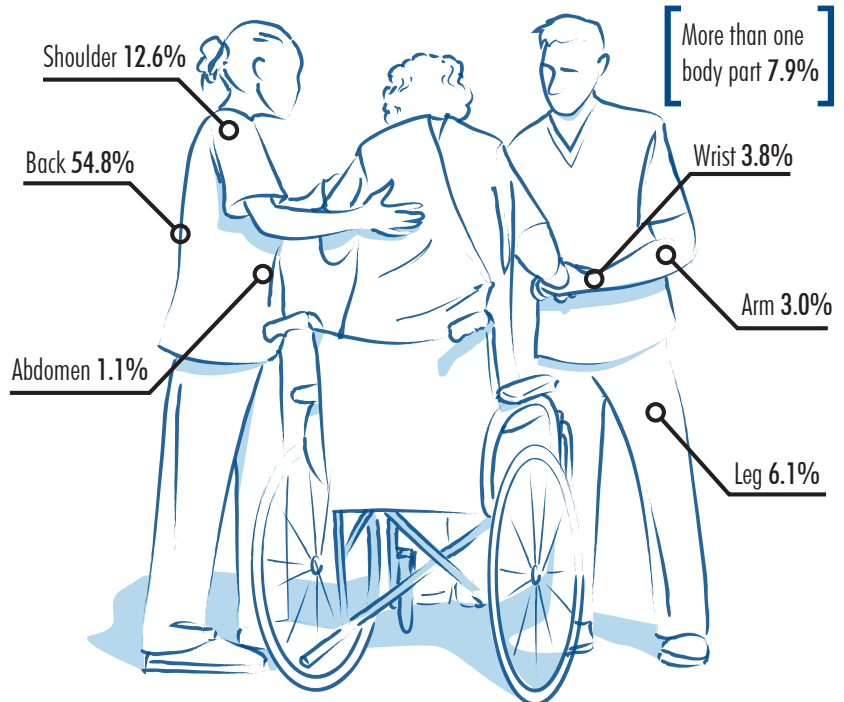


Use of **lift equipment** can **decrease injuries**. Patients can also **benefit** from lifting equipment, through:<sup>4</sup>

- ▶ Better safety and comfort
- ▶ Improved satisfaction
- ▶ Reduced risk of falling, being dropped, friction burns, skin tears and bruising, and dislocated limbs



The body parts most frequently injured are the **back and shoulders**.<sup>2,3</sup>



Musculoskeletal injuries in healthcare are often related to **repeated manual patient handling activities, such as transferring and repositioning patients**, and working in awkward positions.<sup>3</sup>

**High-risk tasks** include:<sup>3</sup>

- ▶ Transfers: from toilet to chair; from chair to bed; from bathtub to chair
- ▶ Repositioning: from side to side in bed; a patient in a chair
- ▶ Lifting a patient in bed
- ▶ Making the bed with the patient in it



**Maximum weight** for manually moving or handling **any patient** is **35 lb**. **Protect yourself—and your patients—from pain and injury** by using **lifting equipment**.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. U.S. Department of Labor. Economic news release: table 18 [online]. 2012 Nov 8 [cited 2013 Aug 2]. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/osh2.t18.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics. U.S. Department of Labor. Economic news release: nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work, 2011 [online]. 2012 Nov 8 [cited 2013 Aug 2]. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/osh2.nr0.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Occupational Safety & Health Administration. U.S. Department of Labor. Safe patient handling [online]. [cited 2013 Aug 2]. <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/healthcarefacilities/safepatienthandling.html>

<sup>4</sup> Massachusetts Nurses Association. Safe patient handling toolkit [online]. 2011 [cited 2013 Aug 9]. [http://www.massnurses.org/files/file/Health-and-Safety/Articles/Safe\\_Patient\\_Handling/Safe\\_Patient\\_Handling\\_booklet\\_2011.pdf](http://www.massnurses.org/files/file/Health-and-Safety/Articles/Safe_Patient_Handling/Safe_Patient_Handling_booklet_2011.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. CDC congressional testimony: safe patient handling lifting standards for safer American workforce [online]. 2010 May 11 [cited 2013 Aug 5]. <http://www.cdc.gov/washington/testimony/2010/20100511.htm>