

A Guide For Caregivers: Moving People Safely

DIALOGUE	KEY POINTS
I. Introduction	
<p>Welcome to this video session. My name is Stephanie Phan and I am an occupational therapist as part of the Pencer Brain Tumour centre at the Princess Margaret Hospital. What you will be seeing in this video is designed for caregivers, supporting persons with brain tumours. This video is intended as a learning tool, as part of the “Care for the Caregivers” workshop, and is not meant as a substitute for professional training or consultation. The transfers shown in this video emphasize the use of proper posture and body mechanics in order to protect backs, and at the same time help to increase independence for the patients. Please exercise caution if you have a bad back or a previous injury and re-evaluate your own ability to assist your loved ones with transfers, and perhaps ask for help if you need it or are having difficulty or pain doing the transfers.</p> <p>Following, we will be demonstrating stair climbing, how to lower a patient onto the floor safely in the event of a fall, how to assist a person up from a fall, and a series of transfers from the tub, the car, and the toilet. Carol, the physiotherapist will be demonstrating the first three parts of the transfers and Becky, the occupational therapist will be demonstrating the last three parts.</p> <p>Our patient is Lynn, she will be role-playing a brain tumour patient with right-sided weaknesses, indicated by the red scarves attached to her arm and leg. We recognize that not all brain tumour patients have right-sided weakness, and the extent of the weakness and decreased balance is different from person to person. However, in the interest of demonstrating more challenging transfers at home, we have opted to show transfers in a person with increased right-sided weakness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The video assists caregivers who support individuals living with a brain tumour -The video is a learning tool only -The video is not meant to be used as a substitution for professional consultation - The red scarf on actor’s leg and arm indicates weak side of body

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II. Climbing Stairs	
<p>We're going to try stair climbing, one of the most important things is to ensure that the stairs you are climbing are free of clutter. And that we're going to do is go up the stairs, and then down the stairs. Come over to the staircase.</p> <p>When spotting someone on the stairs, make sure that when you go up the stairs you are diagonally behind the person you're spotting. Both hands go on the railing, and we lead up with the good leg. Two feet per step, and you'll notice my position, I'm bending from the knees and the hips. To ensure that I'm using my large muscles to support her and not my small muscles in at the back.</p> <p>And then we'll turn.... And to come down the stairs, I have one hand on the chest-bone, the other hand on the hip. If she were to fall, I would steady her in that position. And we come down with the affected leg first. Notice my legs are in stride. And one more. That's good! Good.</p> <p>Rule of thumb is, when you go up the stairs, you're leading with the good leg, when you go down the stairs, you're leading with the affected leg. The little rhyme to remember is "good leg goes to heaven, bad leg goes to hell". If you remember that, you can't go wrong.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Stand diagonally behind patient when going up stairs-Step up with the good leg first-Step down with the weak leg first-Caregiver should bend at the knees and the hips

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<p>III. Stepping Up Using a Walker</p>	
<p>Okay, so now we're going to try some steps with a walker. Now the only time you're going to use a walker on a step is if its something like a curb. You would not use a walker if you are going up a regular staircase. So the wide step or the curb would have to be wide enough so that your walker would safely fit completely on the step. You don't want anything hanging off the back, okay, so this is not for a regular staircase.</p> <p>Okay, our body mechanics are the same, as we did on the previous steps, the only difference is now we're using the walker. So the walker's going to go first, good and we're going to go up with the good leg, and then with the affected. Again, I'm diagonally behind the patient, in case they need a little support. Hands at the centre of mass. Good leg up. And the right leg. Now we're going to descend the stairs. Again the walker is going to go first, then you're going to lead with the affected side, and then the unaffected side. So....bring the walker....good...affected, good leg....walker the first, affected, good leg. Now my hands are in position again, on the breastbone. My hand at the hips, my hips and knees slightly bent so I can assist her if she falls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Do not use a walker on a regular staircase -Use a walker only on a curb or wide landing -Caregiver stands diagonally behind the patient to prevent falling -When descending, keep one hand on the patient's breastbone and other hand on patient's hip to prevent a fall
<p>IV. Safely Lowering Someone to the Ground</p>	
<p>Okay so now we're going to look at how to safely lower someone to the ground. When you're walking with someone who has poor balance or deficit of some sort so they need assistance or supervision with walking, you should be walking on a diagonal behind them so you're going to be slightly off centre. Your hands should be at the centre of mass or over their hip area. When someone falls, its ideal to be on this diagonal such that when they lose their balance, they're going to land on your thigh so you can safely lower them to the ground. Okay, so we're going to demonstrate it now. So if we're walking along and we lose our balance at this point, we can safely get someone to the ground, and you'll notice that my head is out of the way such that when hers came back she</p>	<p><u>Caregiver-</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -When walking, stand to the side and just behind the patient -This position should prevent injury to the Caregiver should the patient fall.

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<p>didn't bonk me on the head, we're both safe.</p>	
<p>V. Assisting Someone From The Floor</p>	
<p>Now we're going to look at how to get someone up once they have been lowered to the floor. If someone has been lowered to the floor and they're unconscious or injured, 911 should be called and a professional should look at the person who has gone to the floor. So this is for people that are not injured. So the first thing you want to do when you're on the floor is, crawl towards a surface that you can use to help get yourself up. And you move along with the patient, so we're just gonna crawl towards the surface. As we get close, we want to bring the good leg up so that we can use that to push ourselves up. And then the arm on the chair, and we come to stand. And as I am doing this, you'll notice that I am using my leg muscles to help bring the person to the chair, and I'm not lifting from my back.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -If patient loses consciousness, call for emergency medical assistance -If patient is not hurt and is able to move, have patient crawl toward a hard surface -Position the good leg to prepare for standing -Assist patient to use arms and legs to stand up.
<p>VI. Assisting With Transfers</p>	
<p>A. From Wheelchair to Toilet Seat</p>	
<p>➤ Preparing For The Transfer – (From Wheelchair to Toilet Seat)</p>	
<p>My name's Becky Jin and I am an occupational therapist. Now we will be demonstrating a transfer from a wheelchair onto a toilet with a raised toilet seat with arms. A raised toilet seat with arms is beneficial for the home, because it increases the height of the toilet, and allows the patient with weakness and poor balance to transfer more safely. The patient is currently in a wheelchair, in a position to complete the transfer. The first thing that you have to do is ensure that the brakes are locked on either side. The next thing we would like to do is to remove the leg rests so they are not an obstacle during the transfers.</p>	<p><u>Raised toilet seat with support arms.</u> -This seat makes getting on and off the toilet easier and safer</p> <p><u>Wheelchair Safety.</u> -Make sure the brakes are locked on both sides Remove leg-rests prior to transfer</p>
<p>➤ Starting to Move – (From Wheelchair to Toilet Seat)</p>	
<p>During the transfer, you want to ensure that you are always on the affected side of the patient, in order to guard the weak leg and weaker arm. The patient's right side is weak, so my knees will be in between their leg, ready to guard the weak knee. My hands will be at their hip to support</p>	<p><u>Caregiver's Position.</u> -Stand on the patient's weak side -Caregiver's knees brace patient's weak leg -Hands at patient's hips</p>

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<p>their body weight. First I will ask the patient to shift forward in the wheelchair towards the edge of their seat. Can you please shift forward? Okay stop right there. When they are at the edge of the seat, ensure that their legs are tucked under the seat, in a stance ready to stand up.</p>	
<p>➤ Demonstration of transfer (From Wheelchair to Toilet Seat)</p>	
<p>When they are getting ready to stand up, make sure your hand is at their hips, their arms are always on the armrest, and their body, the top of their body is going to lean forward. Okay, so lean forward, and push up from the wheelchair. And once in the standing position, we will slowly turn towards their strong side. Okay, so we will turn. Okay, and stop. When you are directly in front of the toilet, have the patient step back until they feel the raised toilet seat behind their legs. Step back. Do you feel the toilet seat?</p> <p>At this point have the patient take off their underpants and their undergarments. When that is done, have them reach, one hand at a time, toward the armrest. Good hand first. So left hand on the armrest, now the right arm. Get your body into position to lower their bottom towards the raised toilet seat, bending at your hips rather than your waist.</p> <p>After you have the patient seated comfortably and securely on the raised toilet seat, allow them privacy, close the door, and stay close by in case help is needed. When the patient is ready to return to the wheelchair, we do the same type of transfer, except opposite.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Have patient push up from armrests of the wheelchair -Turn together towards the patient's strong side -Patient steps back toward the toilet -Remove undergarments, patient grasps the armrests and lowers themselves down
<p>B. From Walker To A Tub</p>	
<p>➤ Preparing for the Transfer (From Walker to a Tub)</p>	
<p>Now we'll be demonstrating a tub transfer using a tub transfer bench. Before taking a bath or a shower, ensure that the proper equipment is in place. For example, a rubber bath mat, a handheld shower and removal of all scattered rugs. Wall-bars are also helpful depending on the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use a 2-wheel walker to approach tub Remove extra clutter

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<p>➤ Walker to Tub Transfer Chair (From Walker to a Tub)</p>	
<p>Our patient is going to be walking into the bathroom using a 2-wheel walker. Because of the narrow hallway, you will be standing-I will be standing behind the patient on the affected right side. Your hand should always be at their hip, ready to catch them in case of a fall. So we're going to walk in, and at this point we are going to turn so that we are backing into the chair.</p>	<p><u>Caregiver Position</u> -When standing, stand to the side and just behind the patient -Place hands at patient's hip to prevent falling</p>
<p>➤ Getting Seated Safely (From Walker to a Tub)</p>	
<p>Always turn towards the strong side, and during turns, the walker should be moving before the legs. As you can see, the patient is moving the walker, and then she takes a step. When we are directly in front of the tub transfer bench, the patient will walk backwards. Take a step back, bring the walker back. Take a step back, bring the walker back. When the patient feels the tub-transfer bench behind their legs (Do you feel the tub transfer bench?), their left hand is going to reach towards the seat and they are going to slowly lower themselves onto the tub transfer bench. The patient's going to scoot back into the tub transfer bench as far as she can go.</p>	<p>-Always turn patient towards their strong side -When walking forward, walker moves forward, then move legs forward -When walking backwards, legs move back first, then the walker moves backwards</p>

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<p>➤ Legs into the Tub (From Walker to a Tub)</p>	
<p>When the patient is seated securely on the tub transfer bench, they will start to turn and lift their legs into the tub. Their left leg is able to move, but their right leg might need some help. So they will be lifting their right leg. They will now shift their bum, and their good leg will lift into the tub and they will assist their affected leg into the tub using their hand. Once they are seated securely inside the tub, now they will shift towards their left so that they are centred in the tub. Once they have completed their shower, ensure that they have completely dried in the seated position prior to transferring out of the bathtub.</p> <p>All bathrooms will look different and will need different equipment. Therefore, please speak to an occupational therapist or a community care access centre nurse for the appropriate equipment and the appropriate set-up of these equipment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Patient turns body towards the tub, then uses her hands to lift her legs into tub -Patient shifts to the centre of the bench
<p>C. From Wheelchair Into a Car</p>	
<p>➤ Preparing for the Transfer (From Wheelchair into a Car)</p>	
<p>We will be demonstrating a car transfer from a wheelchair now. Before we do this, ensure that the car is parked as close to the curb as possible. Have the door open and the window rolled down all the way as a base of support for the patient. Ensure that the car seat is pushed back as far as possible, before transferring. Have a cushion with a bag wrapped around it to increase the height of the seat, and to allow the patient to slide onto the seat easier.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Park car close to curb -Roll down window for easier grip -Move car seat all the way back
<p>➤ Demonstration of Transfer (From Wheelchair into a Car)</p>	
<p>The wheelchair is positioned as close as possible to the seat. The brakes must be locked before the transfer. Ensure that the leg rests are also out of the way so the patient will not be tripping over the foot rests during the transfer. The patient's going to scoot towards the edge of the seat. She will be pushing up from the arm rest and holding the doorframe for support. You must stay on the right affected side of the patient at all times. Your hand is going to go towards the doorframe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Position wheelchair as close as possible to car seat <u>Wheelchair Safety.</u> -Make sure the brakes are locked on both sides Remove leg-rests prior to transfer Caregiver stands on patient's weak side -Patient holds on to doorframe of car for support

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<p>and the patient will slowly walk back into the car. She's going to reach for the seat of the chair and slowly lower her bum into the seat first. Ensure that their head is bent far enough so that they do not hit the frame of the door. Once the patient is seated safely on the chair she will start to turn and position her legs within the car. Her left unaffected leg is able to lift and transfer into the car. Using her hands, she will assist her right affected leg into the car. Transferring out of a car is in the same position as transferring in, in reverse.</p>	
<p>VII. Suggestions For Getting Started</p>	
<p>This now completes our demonstration sessions that looked at how to safely and effectively manage stairs, handling falls, car transfers, tub and toilet transfers. Remember that cooperation is key to carrying out safe and effective transfers. Communicating the steps with the patient gives them some control. Use of assistive equipment also improves safety and saves energy. Practicing transfer techniques will increase confidence and decrease anxiety. As caregivers, it is important to watch your own posture and body mechanics to prevent back injuries. Once again, this video is not a professional training video, to be used in exclusion of seeking professional advice from occupational therapists or physiotherapists. It is designed for this workshop as a tool to assist with learning about transfers. Thank you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cooperation and communication are key to moving patients safely -Caregivers need to rethink their ability to help with moving patients as their own physical condition may change over time

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VIII. Credits	
<p>We would like to thank the Princess Margaret Foundation for their donation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Stephanie Phan, BScOT, Occupational Therapist-Barbara Willson, RN, MS, CON(c), Clinical Educator (Nursing)-Linying Wang, Visiting Nursing Scholar, Shanxi Cancer Centre, Taiyuan, China-Carol M. Hunter, BScPT, Physiotherapist-Becky Jin, BScOT, Occupational Therapist <p>Rehabilitation Services, Princess Margaret Hospital Caregiver Workshop Planning Committee Pencer Brain Tumour Centre Produced with the assistance of the Audio-Visual Department – Princess Margaret Hospital</p>	