The goal is to keep healthcare organizations safe by promoting safety awareness. Employee injuries caused by patient handling account for the most severe and costly injuries in healthcare organizations and often result in life-altering injuries. Most patient handling injuries happen when:

Safe Patient Handling

* Lifting patients
* Transferring patients
* Repositioning patients

In healthcare, safety begins with awareness by managers and staff. Before lifting, transferring, or repositioning a patient, the following steps can reduce the risk of injury.

**Assess the patient’s abilities.**

* Is he or she capable of assisting?
  + Can the patient bear weight?
  + Does the patient have the upper body strength needed?
  + Can he or she understand and follow instructions?
  + Does the patient have any physical issues, such as being overweight, having a vision or hearing impairment, having wounds, or being in pain?
  + Is he or she combative?

**Determine the best and safest procedure for moving the patient.**

* Use an algorithm to walk the caregiver through a series of questions to determine the:
  + Most effective process
  + Type of equipment needed
  + Number of caregivers needed

**Get the assistance you need.**

* Lift/transfer/repositioning partner(s) or team
* Equipment
* Gait/transfer belt
* Sliding board
* Friction-reducing device
* Air-assisted lateral transfer device
* Floor-based lift
* Ceiling-mounted lift