

# Patient Lifting/Packaging/Moving/Transport

## CHAPTER 7.27

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| <b>Submitted By:</b>        | <b>Approved By: Chief of Fire Rescue</b> |

### Purpose

This policy is intended to provide best practices on patient lifting/moving techniques to reduce chances of patient and employee injury, to discuss various patient moving devices, and to provide guidelines on required patient safety restraints to use for patient packaging and transport.

### Policy

#### Patient Lifting

When moving or lifting a patient from the ground, utilize a minimum of two (2) employees whenever possible. If patient location or position prevents this you should attempt to move furniture or slide the patient to a more open area that will allow additional personnel to assist in lifting the patient.

Plan your lift. Designate a team leader for any patient lifting and ensure all team members know when to lift and where you are moving after lifting.

Utilize proper body mechanics:

- Keep a wide base
- Bend at the knees
- Keep the weight close to your body
- Keep a straight back
- Lift with your legs

(Consider the use of patient moving devices such as the MegaMover® to improve body mechanics and increase hand holds.)

If you do not feel you have adequate personnel on scene to perform a safe lift, notify dispatch and attach the closest non-transport resource for additional personnel. Depending on patient status use your best judgement on response mode for this resource (emergency vs non-emergency).

## **Patient Packaging/Moving**

At times the use of specialized equipment will be necessary to move a patient safely or to reduce additional patient injury in the case of trauma. These include but are not limited to a foldable soft stretcher, scoop stretcher, long spine board, stair chair, bariatric stretcher, and standard wheeled stretcher.

In all cases, ensure that the patient is properly positioned on the device and secured with all straps/buckles indicated by the manufacturer.

When utilizing a long spine board (backboard) ensure the patient's cervical spine is immobilized with the use of head immobilizers, a c-collar, or other approved methods outlined in our medical care protocols. Properly utilize all backboard straps to fully immobilize the torso, hips, and lower extremities.

Ensure that your stretcher is outfitted with the required 4-point harness for the shoulders/torso as well as 2 lower extremity straps. **Backboard straps may NOT be used in place of stretcher straps.** *This is in compliance with federal safety standards.*

## **Patient Transport**

Under no circumstances shall any patient be transported unrestrained.

### Transportation of Adults:

Patients requesting transport to the hospital by ambulance are to be transported on the wheeled stretcher utilizing all available straps. If a patient refuses to sit on the stretcher, or you are transporting multiple patients, you may utilize other seating in the patient compartment so long as the patient remains seated and secured with a lap/shoulder belt and doing so will not inhibit any patient care. Document any patient refusals in your EMS report and obtain signatures as required.

When transporting a patient on a long spine board it is recommended to place only one (1) shoulder strap through the top corner of the long spine board in order to prevent the board from sliding while also allowing the patient to be tilted for airway management in the event of vomiting or other airway obstructions. If utilizing the multi-occupant bench seat, ensure one seatbelt is secured through a top corner of the long spine board for this same purpose.

### Transportation of Children:

The age and weight of a child shall be considered when determining an appropriate restraint system.

Every effort should be made to use a department provided child safety harness system for children too small to be secured by standard stretcher straps.

When possible, and with the exception of a minor vehicle crash (e.g. “fender-bender”), avoid transporting children in their own safety seats if the seat was involved in a motor vehicle crash.

Use of the child’s own seat can be considered if no other restraint systems are available and the seat shows no visible damage/defect.

**Transportation of a child in any of the following ways is NOT allowed under normal circumstances:**

1. Unrestrained
2. On a parent/guardian/other caregiver’s lap or held in their arms
3. Using only horizontal stretcher straps, if the child does not fit according to stretcher manufacturer’s specifications for proper restraint of patients
4. On the multi-occupant bench seat or any seat perpendicular to the forward motion of the vehicle, even if the child is in a child safety seat.

When transporting infants and newborns, be sure to maintain body heat.

#### Transportation of Bariatric Patients:

Use of a bariatric stretcher is required when a patient’s size or weight prohibits their ability to fit on the stretcher.

When utilizing the bariatric stretcher, a minimum of four (4) personnel are required to lift and lower it safely. Utilize any lifting handles/bars as indicated by the manufacturer. Under no circumstance, should the bariatric stretcher be raised off the ground with a patient on it.

The patient will be placed on the bariatric stretcher while the stretcher is at its lowest setting and the stretcher will remain at that height for the entirety of transport.

When moving the bariatric stretcher with a patient on it, the front and rear handles will be utilized.

Stretcher straps specific to the bariatric stretcher will be utilized on all patients.

When utilizing the bariatric lift on the rescue, the lift will rest on the ground before the stretcher is placed on the lift. Prior to raising the lift, the crew will ensure the rails of the lift are raised and locked and the wheels of the stretcher are locked.

#### Transportation of Special Needs Patients:

When transporting a special needs patient, special care should be taken to ensure the mental and emotional stability of the patient as well as the physical security during transport.

Caregivers may accompany the patient to the hospital in the patient compartment of the ambulance, provided they are seated and wearing a seat belt and their presence does not interfere with patient care.

Transportation of Patients with Medical Equipment:

The transport of patients that require additional medical equipment (LVAD, ECMO, Ventilators, multiple IV pumps) should be done by the Peak Load Division, and the use of the equipment tray attachment for the stretcher.

Medical Equipment being transported with the patient will be secured appropriately to the equipment tray or, if space and power requirements dictate, secured appropriately for transport in the patient compartment of the rescue.