

MDS Alert

Clip And Save: Follow These Steps to Lift Safely

Use these tips from **Renee Kinder, Ms, CCC-sLP, RAC-CT**, director of clinical education at **Encore Rehabilitation services** in Louisville, Kentucky, when you're moving heavy objects around at work. Check out page 7 for tips specific to handling residents safely.

Remember, whenever you lift, to get your body in neutral positioning:

- Stand tall.
- Pull in your belly button toward your spine.
- Engage (tighten) the muscles in your buttocks.

Look for ways to save your back undue stress during all of your tasks. If you drop something or need to tie your shoes, squat instead of bending over.

Top tip: If you need to make a bed or provide care while a resident is in bed, raise the bed to waist level first, Kinder says.

Follow these eight steps when lifting:

- 1) Assess the load.
- 2) Consider all possibilities as you plan.
- 3) Imagine a line from each shoulder to each foot, to ensure a steady, wide stance.
- 4) Don't bend over at the waist; bend your knees instead.
- 5) Use both hands to ensure a good grip.
- 6) Lift gradually, powering with your legs.
- 7) Keep the load close to your body (utilize your center of gravity).
- 8) Keep your spine straight and in its natural posture.

Don't make these dangerous mistakes:

- Lift heavy objects from the floor without assistance.
- Twist your body while lifting an object or person.
- Lift with one hand.
- Lift while reaching or stretching.
- Lift from an uncomfortable posture.
- Try to catch an object that is falling.
- Hold your breath while you're lifting.