

Name _____ Date _____

The proper use of body mechanics is important for the personal safety of healthcare workers. Your understanding of body mechanics will help you maintain your balance, work more efficiently, and use the longest and strongest muscles to do the work.

Working in pairs, you are to use correct body mechanics to stand, move, lift and turn. One team member will instruct the other team member, and then you will switch places.

1. Begin by thinking about your posture. Stand tall, head erect, back straight, shoulders back, abdomen in, and weight evenly divided between the feet. Stand like this for 60 seconds. Are you feeling any strain? If so, you need to work on your posture.
2. Your center of gravity is in your pelvis. Standing with your back straight and your body in good alignment will help center your weight over your feet. Now lean to the left, lean to the right, lean forward, and lean back. Can you feel your center of gravity?
3. Your base of support is your feet. A wide base of support (8"-10") has more stability, but not too wide, or you will lose your center of gravity. With your feet together, have your partner gently push your shoulder while you try to maintain your balance. Now widen your base of support and try it again.
4. For greater stability, place one foot slightly in front of the other. Can you tell the difference?
5. Place a large book on the floor. To pick it up, keep your back straight, bend your knees and squat down next to the object. Now, pick it up, hold it close to your body, and stand. You should feel your leg muscles doing the work and not your back.
6. Standing in front of a chair, pick it up using your arm muscles and bring it close to your body, then move your feet to turn your body as a unit with the chair, pointing your toes in the direction you are moving. This is the correct way to turn. Try it again but twist instead of moving your feet. Do you feel the strain?
7. Try to gently and safely move a desk a few inches by pulling or pushing, using your body weight. Then try lifting. With each movement, feel the muscles that are working. It is easier to push, pull or roll an object that it is to lift it.
8. Sit back in a chair with a slight curve in the small of your back and your feet flat on the floor, shoulders back and head up. This is good sitting posture.
9. To stand, plant your feet firmly on the floor and push with your leg muscles to stand, bending slightly at the hips.

Checklist	
Name:	Name:

* If you cannot move a patient or object safely, always get help. Remember, safety first!