

Gait/Transfer Belt Set Up and Use

A gait belt is a simple but incredibly effective tool for patient movement. The belt provides patient comfort and stability during a move while allowing caregivers to secure an enhanced grip and position themselves properly.

Gait Belt Set Up

- Use good body mechanics while securing the gait belt. (See the first two photos below. Also, review the **Power Lift** and **Tripod Lift/Position** instruction sheets for additional information.)
- Position the patient forward in their seat to make it easier to fit the gait belt.
- Position the belt around the patient's waist at belt level. Place it over the patient's clothing to protect their skin.
- Secure **metal buckles** by:
 1. Threading the tip through teeth-side first
 2. Threading the tip through the D ring
- Remember: **Plastic buckles** must be fully engaged.
- The gait belt must be snug to avoid movement during the transfer. You should only be able to slide two fingers between the belt and the patient.
- Turn the buckle to the side or back of the patient for improved comfort.
- Tuck any excess belt back under the belt.

Get Belt Use

- With your palm up, use a full power grip to grasp and hold the gait belt.
- Follow all facilities guidelines for proper movement techniques and ambulation (see the **Sit/Stand Transfer Caregiver** sheet).
- Remove the belt after the transfer for patient comfort.

Key Notes:

- A gait belt is an **assistive device** and should not be used to lift or move patients outright.
- **Never** use a patient's belt as a gait belt.
- Always coach the patient by communicating all moves and using clear instructions. See **Coach the Patient** sheet for tips.
- Safety is paramount. Patient falls are the **most common** cause of caregiver injury.

Remember:

Before moving a patient, always follow the tips on the **Safe Patient Interaction** instruction sheet to assess the patient and situation.



Power position



Tripod position



With palm up, grasp the gait belt.

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