

Lift Transfer: Equipment & Positioning

There are many types of mechanical lifts and slings available commercially for home use. The information provided here will address the use of mechanical lifts and slings that would most commonly be supplied for home use. This transfer is referred to as a “Hoyer transfer,” referring to the manufacturer of these lifts.

EQUIPMENT

SLINGS

The two main types of slings utilized with mechanical lifts are the Standard Sling (with or without commode cutout) and the U-Shaped Sling.

Standard Sling



Lift Transfer: Equipment & Positioning

U-Shaped Sling



Advantages of Slings:

Standard Sling	U-Shaped Sling
Can be used for car transfers	Can be placed or removed while in sitting position

Disadvantages of Slings:

Standard Sling	U-Shaped Sling
Cannot be placed or removed while in sitting position	Cannot be used for car transfers

Lift Transfer: Equipment & Positioning

LIFTS

In the home setting, manual lifts are the most common, but an electric version is also available.

Manual Lift



Electric Lift



Lift Transfer: Equipment & Positioning



Advantages of Electric Lift

- Can be less physically demanding while raising and lowering a person, which can be important to caregivers who might have wrist, elbow or shoulder injuries.
- Eases transfer performance if only one person is able to assist.

Disadvantages of Electric Lift

- Using an electric lift to get in/out of the car can be more difficult due to the bend in the lift arm that interferes with achieving adequate elevation.
- Not all electric models can be broken down to fit in a vehicle for transport to a destination for use to exit the vehicle.
- The electric motor requires charging and can break down.

Positioning the Sling and Transfer Set-Up

Regardless of which lift or sling is being used, it is important to properly position the sling prior to the transfer. Both the Standard and U-Shaped Slings may be positioned with the person lying down but only a U-Shaped Sling can be positioned properly with the person in a sitting position.

Positioning the Sling in a Supine Position

For Standard Slings, the sling should be placed so that the top of the sling is level with the person's shoulders and the bottom of the net reaches to mid-thigh. Except when transferring for use of the shower or toilet, the cut-out opening should be placed at the top, behind the person's back, and NOT under the bottom, to avoid pressure areas from the seams.

For U-Shaped Slings, position the sling so that it is centered right to left and the lowest point of the sling back is down the low back. Wrap the leg straps under each thigh and cross the leg straps prior to attaching them to the lift.

Positioning the Sling in a Sitting Position

Placing a sling when in a sitting position will NOT work with a Standard Sling. Use a U-Shaped Sling to easily place or remove a sling when sitting. In order to place the sling, provide support in front of the person while they lean forward. Center the back of the sling behind them and slide the lower back edge of the sling as far down as possible. The person can then lean back while you guide the leg straps around and beside the thighs. Lift one leg to draw the strap up under the thigh and then repeat for the other leg. Cross the leg straps prior to hooking into the lift.