

# ELECTRIC PATIENT LIFT

## ***Purpose***

Patient lifts are designed for caregivers to lift and/or transfer an individual. This can be from a bed to wheelchair, a bed to chair, or simply to lift the individual for repositioning. These devices utilize hydraulics as a way to maximize lifting potential and minimize user effort. Individuals should not be moved or transferred without approval from their physician. Patient lifts provide an increased level of safety when moving a person. If you have not seen a therapist or physician in regards to your health conditions that necessitate the need for a patient lift, please do so. Make sure you read and understand all manufacturers' operating instructions.

## ***Types***

Patient lifts come in three basic models: manual, electric, and transfer systems. This instruction sheet will discuss the electric model. Electrical patient lifts have a mast that is attached to a mobile base. A boom is attached to the top of the mast; a hydraulic chamber or electrical motor is attached between the mast and the boom. The hydraulic chamber or the electrical motor performs the lifting. Attached to the end of the boom is a swivel bar that attaches to the sling that wraps around the individual while lifting. The lifting of the individual is controlled by activating buttons on a control panel or hand control.

All patient lifts have a maximum weight limit that they can support. It is important to understand the limits and capacities for your patient lift:

Weight of user (stated by user) is \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.  
Maximum weight capacity of patient lift is \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.

## ***Use***

Electric patient lifts require no specific installation but there are many safety issues that must be adhered to during use. Your medical equipment provider will instruct you on safe use of the lift and the attachment of the sling. A physician or therapist must assist you in a transferring or lifting method that best meets the needs of the person to be lifted.

Before positioning the lift, the adjustable base must be opened and locked in the maximum position. The object that the person is being transferred to should be moved close to the object from which the person is being transferred. If the object being transferred to has wheels, lock the wheels of that object to prevent movement. Place the sling under and around the individual as per the manufacturer's instructions. Position the lift directly over the individual while being aware that the swivel bar does not come in contact with the individual being lifted. The patient should be facing the lift user. **DO NOT LOCK THE WHEELS OF THE PATIENT LIFT WHEN LIFTING AN INDIVIDUAL.** Attach the sling to the hooks on the swivel bar. Raise the individual slightly by pressing the up button and ensure that all connections are secure and that the lift is holding the person steady. If all connections are secure and the lift is operating correctly, the individual can be lifted more to clear the stationary object. Then while using the steering handle, the patient lift can be moved to the transferring object.

## ***Use (Continued)***

Never allow incontinence pads or seating cushions to be placed between the patient and sling material; this may cause the patient to slide out of the sling during transfer. Always make sure any wheels attached to both the object being transferred from and the object being transferred to are locked.

Patient lifts are not transport devices and are intended to transfer a patient from one resting position to another. Patient lifts have many places that can cause pinching or entrapment of parts of the body. Be cautious when using patient lifts to ensure that the individual being lifted does not get any body part or extremity pinched or entrapped. The person being lifted should have their arms inside the straps of the sling.

## ***Safety***

The safe use of a patient lift requires it to be used as instructed, which includes the following safety precautions:

- Always check the security of the boom into the base and the swivel bar on the boom.
- Always inspect the sling after each laundering.
- Always check the sling attachment each time the sling is removed, replaced, and before each use.
- Always use the steering handle to push or pull the patient lift.
- Ensure that the sling is in good shape and has no rips, tears, or separating seams.
- Ensure that the object being transferred to has the capacity to support the weight of the individual.
- Never use the patient lift if the mast, boom, or swivel bar is bent or improperly aligned.
- Never transport a person who is currently being lifted with the patient lift.
- Never add, remove, or disable any feature, part, or function of your patient lift.
- When using in conjunction with home oxygen delivery, the oxygen delivery tubing must be routed and secured so that it does not become entangled and/or damaged.
- Do not lock the lift wheels when lifting a person.
- Do not use any sling that is not approved by the patient lift manufacturer.
- Do not allow any unqualified person to use the patient lift.
- Do not hang anything on the patient lift.
- Do not roll patient lift across deep carpet, raised carpet bindings, door frames, or any uneven surface.
- Do not use any three (3) prong to two (2) prong electrical adapters.
- Do not use an extension cord when connecting the patient lift.
- Do not under any circumstances, cut or remove the round grounding plug from the electrical cord plug.
- Know where the mechanical emergency release control is and how to lower the patient if the electrical power fails.

## ***Safety (Continued)***

In order to ensure care and provide operator safety, make sure you follow these safety guidelines:

- Use nightlights to increase vision around areas of use.
- Wipe up any water or slippery floor spills.
- Remove tripping hazards (loose floorboards, uneven floors, throw rugs, extension cords, clutter, etc.)
- Install grab bars, use bath mats with suction cups, and use an elevated toilet seat to prevent falls.

## ***Maintenance***

Most patient lifters have a hydraulic chamber that must always be intact. If you notice any leakage, contact your medical equipment company immediately and discontinue use. Your patient lift must be kept clean and free from dirt, oil and grease.

Most slings can be machine-washed. It is best to place them inside a pillowcase or laundry bag when washing. If you notice a tear or any fraying parts of the sling, immediately discontinue use and notify your medical equipment company. Your medical equipment company may make regular visits to check the condition of the patient lift and perform routine preventive maintenance. Only qualified repair technicians should diagnose, perform maintenance, or repair any part of your patient lift. Call your medical equipment provider if your patient lift is not functioning properly.