If your care provider wants to use equipment to help move you, please ask any questions you have about the equipment and repositioning tasks. We want you to feel comfortable in this process.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or health care provider if you have questions or concerns. UWMC clinic staff are also available to help at any time.

Safe Patient Handling Committee
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When equipment is used for lifting or repositioning

Your care provider may use equipment to help lift or reposition you. This is to reduce patient injuries such as friction-related skin tears, and to reduce staff injuries and muscle strains.

Staff are encouraged to use technology to help move and lift you, no matter what you weigh. These technologies help prevent injuries to both patients and staff.

This handout explains three types of equipment that staff may use:

- Hovermatt
- Ceiling lifts
- Maxi-Slide Sheet
Hovermatt

A Hovermatt is an inflatable transfer system used to help move a patient from one flat surface to another, such as from bed to a stretcher or a chair. It can also be used to help boost you up in bed.

There is no weight limit with this system, but more staff may be needed to move patients who are over a certain weight or when there are special handling needs such as lines or drains.

The Hovermatt fabric allows air to flow through it, so it should not harm your skin. By using the Hovermatt, the lifting load on staff is reduced by 90%.

How does it work?

Air is pushed out through tiny holes in the bottom of the mattress. An air supply is connected to the Hovermatt, which inflates the mattress as needed for repositioning. It can then be deflated and left beneath you.

Is it scary to be on the Hovermatt?

The mattress can make a loud noise when it is inflated, and it may slide on the bed. UWMC staff are trained in how to handle the Hovermatt to keep you safe.

Ceiling Lifts

Ceiling lifts are motorized lifts that are mounted on the ceiling. They are used to assist in repositioning tasks such as turning, lifting up in bed, and moving out of the bed to another flat surface or to a chair.

A single-motor ceiling lift can hold 550 pounds. It will not lift if it cannot hold you. A few patient rooms have a dual-motor lift that holds about 1,000 pounds.

How does it work?

A soft sling is placed under you. The sling has loops on the side that are hooked into the ceiling lift system. The ceiling lift can be moved easily to any place in the room. A chair or limb sling may be used in addition to the flat sling.

Is it scary to be in the lift?

We want to make you feel safe and comfortable when the lift is in use. Some people have different feelings about being moved or lifted, but repositioning with a lift should be a smooth process. Staff may be able to make you more comfortable by moving a pillow or changing the length of the loop.

Is the ceiling lift safe?

Yes. The ceiling lift has been used in Europe and Canada for over 10 years. Its safety has been tested and the technology is very advanced.

At UWMC, we are committed to bringing the best and safest technology to bedside care for our patients. The ceiling lift will work only when it is safe to lift you. Lifts at UWMC undergo regular inspection and maintenance to make sure they are safe and working well.

Maxi-Slide Sheet

The Maxi-Slide Sheet is a friction-reducing transfer sheet. It is tubular and made with Gortex fabric, so you can smoothly glide across with help from staff. The sheet is softer and causes less skin injury than hard slider boards. There is no weight limit. The sheet can be used with any patient.