

Transferring a Client using a Sit-Stand Lift Safe Work Procedure

Issue Date: May 1, 2026

Last Review Date: _____

Reviewed By: _____

Risk Factors: The risk of accidents with mechanical lifts is high, if used incorrectly. Models of mechanical lifts may vary and the operating manual for the specific mechanical lift should be reviewed to ensure safe operation. Sit-Stand lifts are for level ground and indoor use only.

Client Considerations: The sit-stand lift and the sit-stand sling/harness must both have the appropriate lifting capacity for the client. The sling must be appropriate for the client's current abilities, weight and size.

In order to use a sit-stand lift with a client, the client must be assessed to meet the following specific capabilities:

- Client has at least partial weight-bearing ability.
- Client is cooperative, predictable and reliable in physical and mental performance.
- Client can follow instructions.
- Client can sit at bedside or in a chair independently or with minimal assistance.
- Client may not be able to take effective steps or shuffle their feet effectively.
- Client can grip the lift's handles with 1 or 2 hands.



Number of Workers:

- A minimum of 2 workers is required. If transferring a client with bariatric needs, use a minimum of 3 workers.
- If additional workers are needed to manage the client and/or any attachments, the workers are to use their clinical judgement and acquire any additional assistance needed.

Equipment Needed: Sit-stand lift and a sit-stand sling/harness.

Procedure:

1. Check the sit-stand lift

- Verify the weight capacity of the lift to ensure it is appropriate for the client's weight.
- Inspect that the lift is in good working condition:
 - Battery is charged - If the lift has a battery pack, obtain it and position it on the lift.
 - Wheels are working
 - Lift is functioning properly

2. Moving the sit-stand lift

- If the lift has a charging cord, unplug the cord and wrap the cord length on the lift so it is secure.
- When moving the lift, use safe body mechanics principles for pushing and pulling:
 - Grip the lift's handles using a neutral grip and keep the elbows close to the trunk.
 - Stand in a neutral spine posture with ears, shoulders and hips aligned.
 - Power the move using momentum from the powerful leg muscles using a forward or backward weight shift in a staggered stance.
 - Move your feet when turning the lift to minimize twisting.

3. Sling selection

- Ensure the selected sling is the appropriate sling for the client's current abilities, weight and size.

4. Perform a visual inspection of the selected sling

- Are there any signs of fraying on the straps? Does the sling have any holes, loose stitching or discoloration? Is there any damage to the buckle? *If yes, this sling should no longer be used.*
- Are you able to read the label to confirm the style of sling, weight capacity, and size? *If not, this sling should no longer be used.*

5. Prepare the environment for the transfer

- The sit-stand lift is intended for short-distance transfers only for client and worker safety. Set up the environment prior to lifting and moving the client to minimize the distance travelled.
- Clear the area where you are performing the transfer; ensure there are no hazards, cords, or clutter that may impact the ability to perform the transfer safely.
- Prepare where you are transferring the client to – have the chair, commode, or bed in position. Move equipment, as needed.

6. Ensure enough workers are present to perform the transfer

- Two workers minimum are required to be present when moving a client using a sit-stand lift.

7. Assess the client's capabilities

- Ensure the client has the appropriate capabilities, as discussed above, to use the lift at the time of using the lift.

8. Position the sling on the client

- Obtain an appropriately sized sit-stand sling/harness and position it around the client's waist in a seated position. Apply the Velcro, then buckle.

9. Move the sit-stand lift toward the client in a seated position

- Widen the base of the sit-stand lift for stability.
- Position the sit-stand lift close to the client so they can reach the foot platform to position their feet on.

- Adjust the leg supports of the sit-stand lift, if possible, so they are positioned just below the client's kneecaps.

10. Attach the sling to the lift

- Lower the lift's lifting arm toward the client.
- Position the sling loops on the lifting arm's attachment sites.
- Have the client position their hands on the handles.
 - Note: The client must have their arms outside the sling/harness and grip at least one handle.

11. Check the lift's brakes and base

- Keep the **brakes OFF** when lifting the client so the lift can self-correct its position.
- The base should be widened for stability with lifting and moving the client.
 - Note: Models of sit-stand lifts may vary when to use the brakes and when to widen the base. Verify the appropriate approach by reviewing the manufacturer's direction in the lift's operating manual.

12. Raise the client to a standing position

- Begin to raise the lifting arm slowly. Verify that all sling loops are attached appropriately and that the client is positioned in the sling appropriately.
- Raise the client enough to clear the surface. Only raise the client as much as needed.
- Assess that the client is able to continue with the transfer before continuing.

13. Move the client

- One worker operates and moves the lift, while the other worker(s) monitors the client.
- Use safe body mechanics principles for pushing and pulling when moving the lift.
- Move the client to be centered above the surface they will be transferred to.

14. Lower the client to the surface

- Keep the base widened. Keep the brakes off so the lift can self-correct its position during client lowering.
 - Note: Models of sit-stand lifts may vary when to use the brakes. Verify the appropriate approach by reviewing the manufacturer's direction in the lift's operating manual.
- Lower the client to the surface.

15. Sling removal

- Lower the lifting arm and remove the sling loops from it. Ensure the client is fully removed from the lift and all sling loops are removed from the spreader bar.
- Remove the sling from the client.

16. Evaluate the transfer

- Consider how the transfer went and if anything should be completed differently for future transfers.

17. Prepare for future transfers

- Pull the lift away from the client.
- Return the lift to its storage area with the base compacted, brakes applied and the battery charging.

Resources:

- [BHM Ergostand Operating Manual](#)
- [Arjo Sara Flex Operating Manual](#)
- [Arjo Loop Slings – Instructions for Use](#)