

When you transfer, make it a goal to **minimize injury to your wrists, arms, and shoulders**.

**Transferring in and out of your wheelchair puts higher stress on your arms and shoulders than anything else you do on a regular basis. Learning the correct way to transfer is extremely important in order to keep your arms functioning and pain-free.**

1

## OPTIMIZE YOUR POSITION

### Wheelchair Position



**Move** wheelchair within 3 inches of target surface.

**Angle** your wheelchair 0-19 degrees with the target surface

**Turn** power off.

### Body Position



**Remove** armrest and clothing guard.

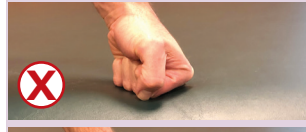
**Scoot** buttocks forward to transfer in front of rear wheel.

**Place** both feet in a stable position on the floor or foot plates.

2

## PROTECT WRISTS, ARMS, AND SHOULDERS

### Grips



**Grip** hand on edge of bed, armrest, wheel, seat, or frame. If unable to grip, use curled fingers to reduce strain.

**Avoid** fist or flat hand.

### Hand Placement



**Your leading shoulder should be at a 30-45 degree angle.**

**Keep** your trailing hand (*hand behind you*) close to your body and your leading hand (*hand in front of you*) close to the landing site.

**Avoid** twisting your leading arm.

3

## CONTROL YOUR MOVEMENT

### Head-Hips Relationship



**Bend** forward so your chest is nearly parallel to the floor.

**Attempt** to pivot so the head and hips move in opposite directions.

### Smooth Landing



**No Explosive Movements!**

**Keep** movements for both transfer and landing smooth and safe.

**Avoid** landing or resting on the tire.

Visit [MSKTC.org](https://msktc.org) for more resources about safe transfer techniques and other types of transfers, including using sliding boards: <https://msktc.org/sci-topics/safe-transfer-techniques>

**Safe Independent Power Wheelchair Transfers** was developed by researchers at the University of Pittsburgh Spinal Cord Injury Model System and the American Institutes for Research in collaboration with the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center.

**Source:** The content in this infographic is based on research evidence and/or professional consensus and has been reviewed and approved by experts from the Spinal Cord Injury Model Systems, funded by the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).

**Disclaimer:** This information is not meant to replace the advice of a medical professional. You should consult your health care provider regarding specific medical concerns or treatment. The contents of this infographic were developed under grants from NIDILRR (grant numbers: 90DP0082, 90DP0078 and 90SI5014). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this infographic do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, or HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the federal government.

**Copyright © 2021** Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC). May be reproduced and distributed freely with appropriate attribution. Prior permission must be obtained for inclusion in fee-based materials.