

# Prevent Strain Injuries

## Follow the 6 Rules of Body Mechanics

**1. Use Gait Belts when lifting consumers.** Wrap the gait belt around the consumer's waist allowing for an easier grip to pull the consumer upward. Always brief the consumer on how the lift will proceed and whether or not they will be required to do anything.

**2. Keep the back straight and keep the consumer close to the body.** The consumer can assist in the lift by placing his/her arms around your torso, if possible.

**3. Get low, bending legs and knees when lifting.** The leg muscles and knees will perform the brunt of the lift, reducing the force on the lower back and upper torso.

**4. Don't twist when lifting.** Pivot with the whole body when moving a consumer from a bed to a wheelchair or vice versa.

**5. Use a lift device.** When the weight of an individual is too much for you (or a group) to handle, use a lift to get individuals in and out of bed or the bathtub.

**6. Push carts/wheelchairs rather than pull them.**

Pushing as opposed to pulling a cart/wheelchair keeps the back from absorbing the weight.

