

## I. Workplace Hazards for Caretakers :

There mainly are infection, musculoskeletal injury, sleep problems.

### 1. Infections

Caretakers may be infected due to exposing to blood with bacteria, body fluid, aerosol droplet, urine, stool, vomit etc. The common route of transmission is :

Route of transmission	Infection
Blood infection	Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, AIDS
Air or aerosol droplet infection	Flu, Tuberculosis, SARS
Contact infection	Herpes, Contact dermatitis
Infection via mouth (expose to stool tainted materials)	Acute gastrointestinal infection, Hepatitis A

### 2. Occupational Musculoskeletal Injury

Moving patient, tapping the back, reversing body or rehabilitating patient etc. often result in musculoskeletal injury due to overuse of strength, inappropriate position, or repeated motion. If caretakers are the elder people, it will increase the risk and seriousness of musculoskeletal injury.

### 3. Sleep Problem

Caretakers need to stay up all night or get up to take care of patients periodically. As a result, it is easier to appear the situations that caretakers cannot sleep long, deep, and well.

## II. Hazards Prevention :

Sound sanitary and eating behaviors along with regular exercise are the key to keeping body healthy. The following will list infection prevention, musculoskeletal injury prevention, and sleeping suggestions.

### 1. Infection Prevention

#### 1) Wash hands frequently

Before eating, after contacting patients, patients' feces or body fluid, before and after wearing gloves should wash hands. The right way to wash hands is to rinse hands at least 15 to 20 seconds by using running water and soap or sterilized solution.



#### 2) Wear gloves

If there is possibility of contacting blood, body fluid, excretion, and feces, one should wear gloves made from water-proof latex, vinyl, or rubber. While taking off the gloves, one should pull down gloves from the wrist to turn inside out that let tainted side face inside then discard gloves and wash hands. Note: Washing hands must not be replaced and omitted by just using gloves.

#### 3) Wear eye goggle, or facepiece respirator

It is possible that body fluid sprays off from the patients. If patients cough or sneeze, caretakers should wear protection tools such like facepiece respirator. When using facepiece respirator, one should keep in mind that:

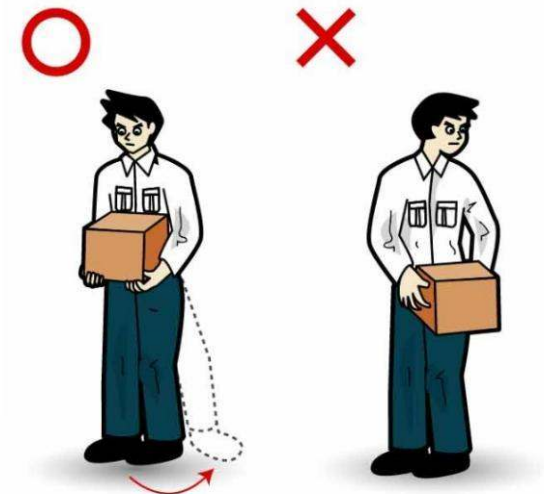
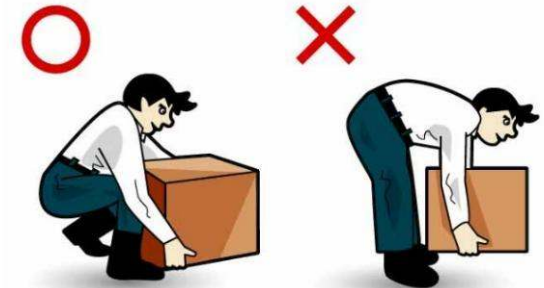
- (1) Although tie-on surgical mask can provide protection, it is less effective than cup mask on protection purpose because it lacks curved edge and can not tightly match with face shape.
- (2) It is better to use a facepiece respirator only once. If it is necessary to use repeatedly, it should be kept under clean and adequately ventilated circumstances. In case the following situations happen, it should not be used any more: Possibly tainted, worn down, deformed, smeared, peculiarly smelled, and hard to breathe.
- (3) When taking off the mask, one should avoid contaminating it. Also, getting infected from the mask should be avoided. Wash hands thoroughly before and after taking off the facepiece respirator.
- (4) When disposing the possibly tainted facepiece respirator, one should avoid viruses being scattered. Turn tainted side within then put mask in a plastic bag before seal it.

#### 4) Wear working suit

Wear work suit all the time during work and wash it frequently. After being off duties, leaving the ward, or go to cafeteria, one should take off working suit. Always wash working suit separately from other clothes.

### 2. Musculoskeletal Injury Prevention

- 1) When moving heavy objects, one should keep body close to the objects and avoid bending the back. Squat down or bend both legs that lower the center of gravity to avoid waist injured. Do not just twist around the waist when moving heavy objects. Use one of the feet as axis then move another one to twist the body, which can avoid knees and waist getting injured.



- 2) In case that bending down and stretching forward are necessary when taking care of patients, one should sustain body by using one of the hands to avoid waist suffering great force. If the patient needs to be moved, caretaker should bend both feet to lower the center of gravity which can avoid waist getting injured.



- 3) Keep proper sitting position. It had better that the whole back leans against the back of chair. In order to avoid the waist part vacating from the chair, one may put back cushion or small pillow behind the back to avoid waist suffering too much force.

### 3. Sleeping Suggestion

- 1) Hold the chance of lunch hour or other short break to take a nap.
- 2) Taking stretch exercise before going to bed would help sleep well, but do not work out excessively before sleep.
- 3) The activity before bedtime should be as moderate as possible. Do not bring out emotion in high excitement.
- 4) The principle of eating is to eat normally, regularly, and proportionally. Avoid eat too much food or drink coffee, tea, or nicotine etc that kind of invigorators. If taking night shift, one may eat as substantially and healthily as possible. Remember not to take refreshing stuff and do not eat too much or fatty food.

### 4. Other Notice and Suggestions

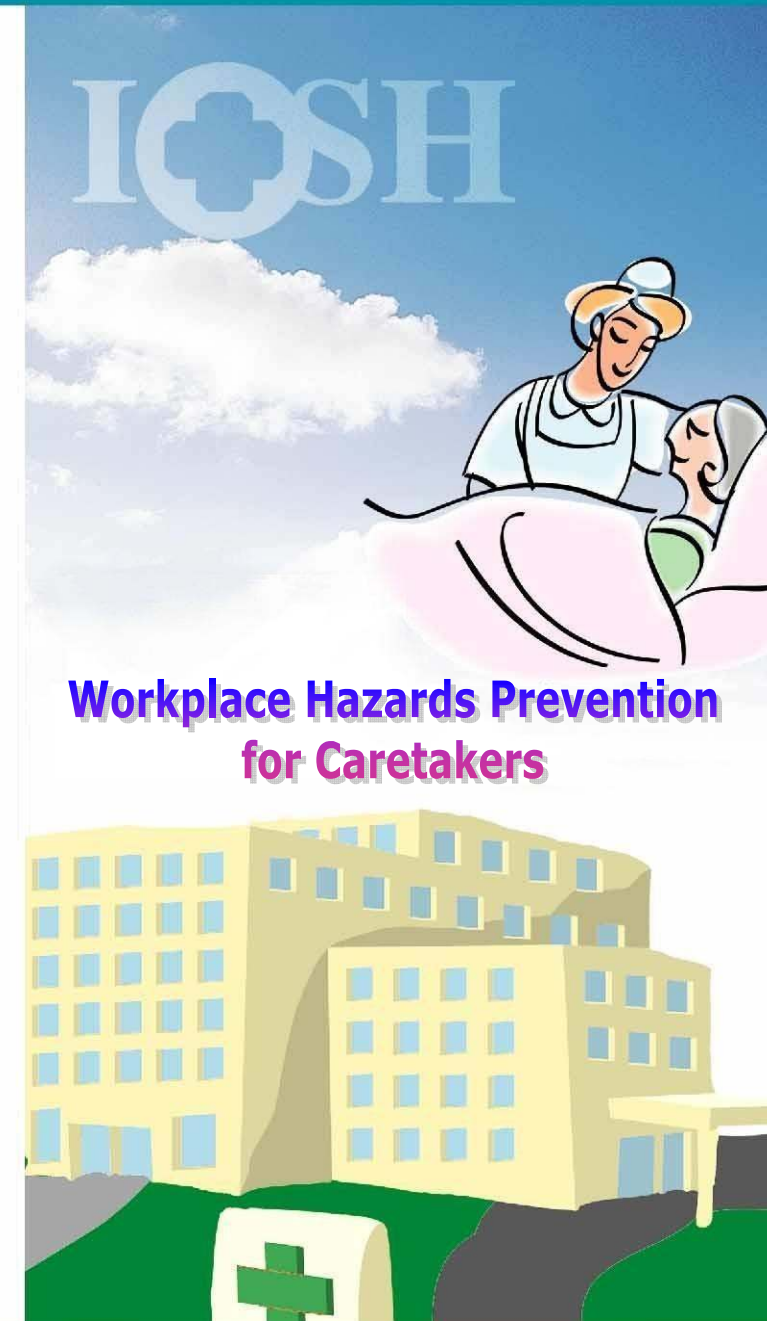
- 1) Take care of only one patient at once. The moving range should be limited in a single ward and should not stroll around in the hospital.
- 2) Take injection as necessary to reduce the chance of infection, such like Hepatitis B, tuberculosis, or flue vaccine.
- 3) Watch the infection conditions on the patient or the other patients in the same ward so as to adapt appropriate self-protection measures.
- 4) To develop regular exercise habit, stretch the whole body on the free time while taking care of patients.
- 5) To participate related education training seminar.
- 6) Take medical examination periodically every year.



Address : No. 99, Lane 407, Hengke Rd., Sijhih City,  
Taipei County 22143, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Website : [www.iosh.gov.tw](http://www.iosh.gov.tw)

Phone : (02) 2660-7600



Edited by  
Institute of Occupational Safety and Health,  
Council of Labor Affairs, Executive Yuan