

Working Nurses and Musculoskeletal Pain: Evidence-Based Education to Prevent Injury and

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The Problem

The work of nurses and other health care professionals is physically demanding

- Nearly 10,000 nurses missed at least one work day from musculoskeletal injury in 2016¹
- Nursing assistants report more injuries per year than construction workers¹
- Patient handling such as repositioning in bed, transferring from bed to chair, and assisting patients with toileting are the types of movements most often associated with musculoskeletal pain and injury in nurses²
- Most common area of injury for nurses: the back²
- Qualitative study revealed that
 - Nurses often put the welfare of their patients in front of their own bodies³
 - Believe that an aching back is simply a part of working as a nurse³

Need for nurses and health care professionals is on the rise

- 20% of population will be over the age of 65 by 2030⁴
- 3.5 million health care professionals will be needed to maintain staffing levels⁴
- Nurse injuries and disabilities will compound the staffing shortage

Evidence-Based Teaching Project

- Online educational video with the goal of teaching proper methods of safe patient handling to nurses, nursing assistants, medical assistants, physical and occupational therapists
- Free website hosted by the author, no login needed
- Accessible to anyone with internet access
- 8th grade reading level to reach health care professionals with varying levels of education
- Brief instructional videos along with written material for different types of learners
- Instructions on lateral transfers, repositioning in bed, sit-to-stand equipment, and powered patient lifts
- Created with the fast-paced, information-seeking consumer in mind
- Concludes with a 28-question quiz to evaluate learning

Module Objectives

- Understand the prevalence of musculoskeletal injury among health care professionals
- Describe how and where injuries happen
- Understand instructions for using safe patient handling equipment
- Discuss barriers to using the equipment and ways to overcome them

Collaborative Expertise

- Content developed by a nurse, ergonomics specialist, and M.D. musculoskeletal researcher

Nurses and health care professionals suffer from injuries by manually handling patients.

Using safe patient handling equipment can prevent back, shoulder, and joint injuries.

Literature Review

Health care professionals who have direct contact with patients have a significantly higher risk of injury than non-patient care workers

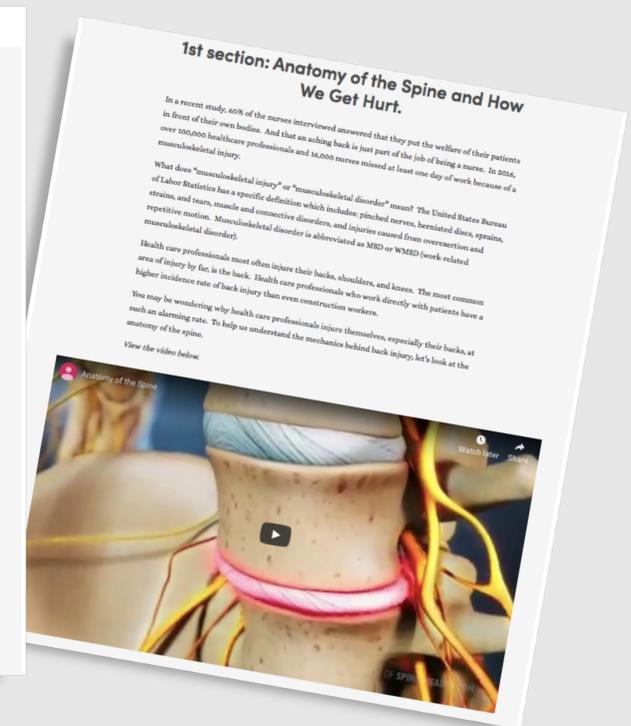
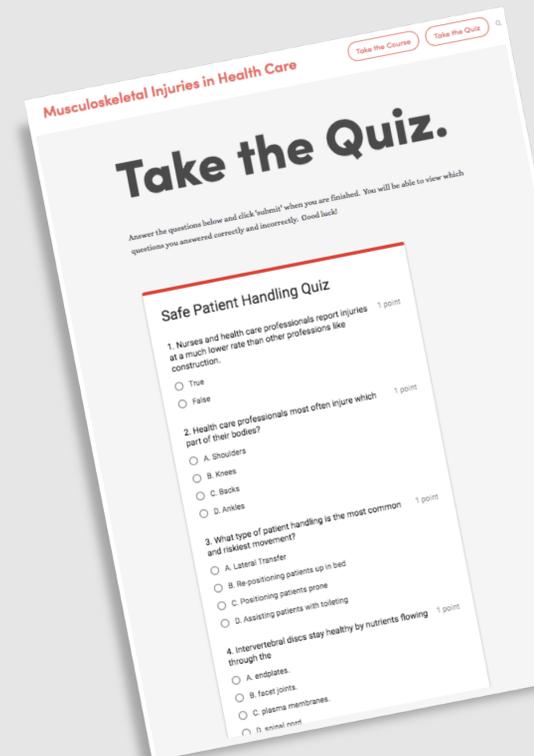
- Association between direct patient care workers and an increase in injuries^{2,5,6}
- Movements that frequently cause injury: repositioning in bed, transferring from bed to chair, and assisting patients with toileting^{2,5,6}
- The back is the most commonly injured area of the body²

Safe patient handling equipment reduces the amount of force on bodies

- Strong association between reduction in reported musculoskeletal injuries and the implementation of safe patient handling equipment^{7,8,9,10}
- Safe patient handling equipment significantly reduces the amount of force required to move patients^{9,13,14,15}

Barriers to consistently using safe patient handling equipment

- Perceived barriers include lack of knowledge of how to use the equipment, concern for equipment malfunction¹⁶
- Nurses regularly put patient needs in front of their own bodies^{3,17}
- May not fully grasp consequences of manually handling patients^{16,17}



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