



## 061: Moving an Injured Person

### *General rule*

The general rule is “don’t move an injured person.” However, some situations require you to break this rule.

### *The risk of moving*

You risk further injuring the victim when you move an injured person. Every move carries the risk of spinal or neck injuries that can result in permanent paralysis or death, even if it does not appear the victim suffered neck or back injuries. Such injuries are often invisible.

### *When to take the risk*

- The victim is in more danger remaining where she or he is. For example, the victim is in a burning building or is wearing a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).
- The victim is in an area off limits to rescue teams. For example, the victim is inside a radioactive area where setting rescue workers up for access would take so long as to be life-threatening.
- It is impossible to aid the victim in his or her present location. For example, the victim is unconscious inside a vessel and you must use an extraction harness to get the victim out to where treatment is available.
- When directed by emergency personnel—such as a company nurse, emergency medical technician, or firefighter—to move an injured person.

### *Reducing the risk of injury*

To get the person onto a backboard safely, you must “log-roll” the injured person to keep the neck stable. Using this technique, you roll the person to one side and slip the backboard under the victim. Then, you roll the person in the other direction.

If at all possible, use a stiff board or medical backboard underneath the injured person while a second person maintains the neutral position of the injured person’s neck.

If time permits, splint and stabilize injured or fractured extremities before moving an injured person. You may need to use your own clothing or that of the victim. If moving is so vital that you can’t wait for rescue personnel, then use whatever is on hand to get the job done.

Move the victim to a safer area and call for help. Remain with the victim and provide additional first aid at the safer location.

### *Cautions*

Consider the emergency measures you must undertake while help is on the way. If you do not absolutely need to move the victim, don’t.

If your foreman or other manager insists you move an injured person, they could be reacting to the stressful situation. Before complying with the move, ensure there is a sound reason for it. Obviously, if there are flames all around you, no further explanation is necessary.

### *Discussion leader duties for this session:*

Review your company policy on first responders and medical emergencies so you can answer questions during the discussion.

### *What this Safety Talk covers:*

When to move or not to move an injured person, and what to do in either case.

### *Discussion notes :*

