

Quality & Safety Alert

Slings & Harnesses



Official Notification:

The United States Food & Drug Administration (FDA) recommends using only slings and harnesses that are approved by the lift equipment manufacturer.

Tollos, Inc. does not recommend any slings other than those provided by Tollos for use on our ceiling lifts, mobile lifts, sit-to-stands, or any other equipment manufactured in our facility that uses slings & harnesses.

Tollos, Inc. makes no claim as to the safety or efficacy of off-brand, non-Tollos slings & harnesses. Use of these products could lead to clinician injury, patient injury, or even death. Tollos, Inc. is not responsible for adverse effects that occur due to the use of off-brand, non-Tollos slings and harnesses and shall not be held liable for any unfortunate occurrences.

The FDA also states that not every sling is suitable for every lift. Sling types and brands should be matched to the equipment with which they are being used.

The complete statement for the FDA regarding lifts and slings is available at <https://www.fda.gov/medical-devices/general-hospital-devices-and-supplies/patient-lifts>. There is a copy of the FDA web page (as it reads on 02-2021) on the reverse of this document.

All Tollos slings and harnesses are guaranteed to be free from defects in material or workmanship right out of the box. Additionally, Tollos reusable slings and harnesses come with a one-year warranty. Complete terms and conditions can be referenced here: <https://www.tollos.com/terms-conditions>.

All Tollos slings and harnesses are weight-tested with our own equipment, helping to ensure patient & clinician safety when used with our equipment. Off-brand and non-Tollos slings & harnesses are not tested with any of the equipment we supply.

All Tollos slings and harnesses are made from durable, specifically-sourced fabrics to prevent fraying and tearing.

Therefore, in the interest of patient & clinician safety, the use of off-brand, non-Tollos slings & harnesses is not recommended by Tollos or the FDA, and may void your equipment warranty.

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Patient lifts are designed to lift and transfer patients from one place to another (e.g., from bed to bath, chair to stretcher). These should not be confused with stairway chair lifts or elevators. Patient lifts may be operated using a power source or manually. The powered models generally require the use of a rechargeable battery and the manual models are operated using hydraulics. While the design of patient lifts will vary based on the manufacturer, basic components may include a mast (the vertical bar that fits into the base), a boom (a bar that extends over the patient), a spreader bar (which hangs from the boom), a sling (attached to the spreader bar, designed to hold the patient), and a number of clips or latches (which secure the sling).



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These medical devices provide many benefits, including reduced risk of injury to patients and caregivers when properly used. However, improper use of patient lifts can pose significant public health risks. Patient falls from these devices have resulted in severe patient injuries including head traumas, fractures, and deaths.

The FDA has compiled a list of best practices that, when followed, can help mitigate the risks associated with patient lifts. Users of patient lifts should:

- Receive training and understand how to operate the lift.
- Match the sling to the specific lift and the weight of the patient. A sling must be approved for use by the patient lift manufacturer. No sling is suitable for use with all patient lifts.
- Inspect the sling fabric and straps to make sure they are not frayed or stressed at the seams or otherwise damaged. If there are signs of wear, do not use it.
- Keep all clips, latches, and hanger bars securely fastened during operation.
- Keep the base (legs) of the patient lift in the maximum open position and situate the lift to provide stability.
- Position the patient's arms inside the sling straps.
- Make sure that the patient is not restless or agitated.
- Lock the wheels on any device that will receive the patient such as a wheelchair, stretcher, bed, or chair.
- Make sure that the weight limitations for the lift and sling are not exceeded.
- Follow the instructions for washing and maintaining the sling.
- Create and follow a maintenance safety inspection checklist to detect worn or damaged parts that need immediate replacement.

In addition to following these best practices, users of patient lifts must read all instructions provided by the manufacturer in order to safely operate the device.

Safe patient handling laws mandating the use of patient lifts to transfer patients have been passed in several states. Due to the passage of these laws, and the clinical community's goal of reducing patient and caregiver injury during patient transfers, it is expected that the use of patient lifts will increase. The best practices listed above are designed to help reduce the risks while enhancing the benefits of these medical devices.

Additional Resources

- [Webinar on Best Practices for Safe Patient Handling and Mobility: Technology - July 18, 2013](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-Safe Patient Handling](#)
- [Patient Lifts Safety Guide \(PDF - 3.8MB\)](#)