



A Guide to Selecting a Hoist

Assistive technology is a piece of equipment, device or system that provides people with practical solutions to everyday life activities. You can search our National Equipment Database www.askned.com.au to view a range of products online.

Hoists are designed to reduce the need to manually lift a person who is unable to stand independently.

The different types of mobile hoists include:

- Full body hoists
- Stand-up hoists
- Multipurpose hoists

Points to Consider when Selecting a Hoist

- Transfer Type and Purpose
- The physical and cognitive abilities of the person being lifted and their carer.
- The user's weight should not exceed the load capacity of the hoist and the sling.
- Whether the hoist can be manoeuvred adequately within the area in which it will be used (e.g. around furniture and through doorways, consider internal width of legs of hoist). An in-home trial is advisable.
- Castors: Larger diameter castors can make the hoist easier to push over most floor surfaces but they raise the height of the base.

- Base height: A low base height (measured from the floor to the highest point on the top of the base) may enable the hoist legs to fit under low furniture.
- Range of the boom; being able to raise the boom and sling to an adequate height is particularly relevant for taller users.
- The lower the boom will reach, the easier it is for the attendant to apply the sling to a person on the floor.
- The availability of replacement parts and repair services.

Mobile Full Body Hoists

Full body hoists can lift a person from the floor, a seat or lying position to another seated or lying position. Some varieties can be dismantled and transported in a car or van.

The mode of operation is usually electric (mains or battery powered) to raise or lower the boom. Batteries need to be kept charged.

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Ceiling Full Body Hoists

Ceiling (overhead) hoists perform similar types of lifts as a mobile hoist but require less floor space, storage or transfer room. They are generally attached to the ceiling or a free-standing frame (for short-term use or where there is questionable ceiling strength).

The user is lifted in a sling or stretcher that runs along an overhead tracking system that can run through single or multiple rooms.

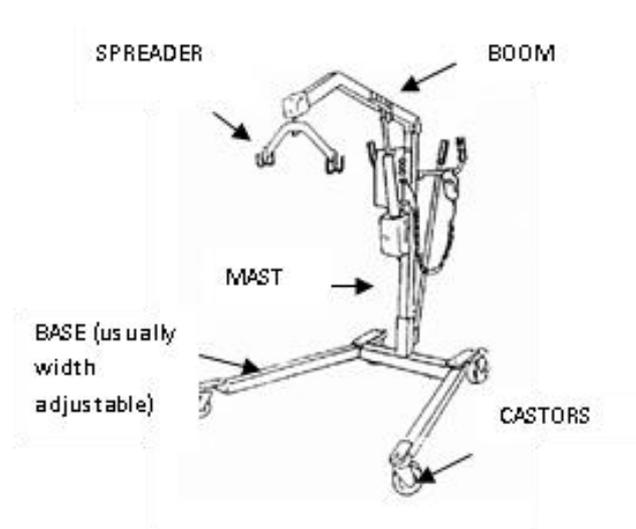
Specific slings can be used for walk (gait) training.

Overhead hoists reduce the physical effort on an attendant when compared with pushing a loaded mobile hoist. However, they can be an expensive system and their use is limited to the location of the tracking.

Stand-up Hoists

Stand-up hoists (or standing hoists) are desired for a person who can bear some weight through their legs. These are a time-efficient alternative to conventional mobile hoists when transferring a person from one seated position to another. They can also improve access to lower limb clothing for toileting and dressing, because the sling that is generally used with a stand-up hoist has no leg straps.

The use of stand-up hoists is restricted: They cannot be used to lift a person from the floor or from a lying position and the user must be able to partially weight bear and maintain a reasonably symmetrical posture while being lifted. This is important to consider when prescribing a hoist for a person with a degenerative condition.



Multipurpose Hoists

Some hoists combine the roles of two hoists. For instance, there is a hoist that can double as both a mobile and stand-up hoist by removing or adding certain components. Some stand-up hoists and mobile hoists can also be used for walk (gait) training.

Slings

The specific slings recommended for each brand of hoist should be used. Hoists that use slings with clip-on ('keyhole') attachments cannot use slings with loop attachments, and vice versa. There are slings designed for a variety of purposes. These include toileting slings, full body slings, general purpose slings, walking slings and amputee slings. Slings are made from a variety of materials including polyester mesh - that allows water to drain through and dry easily, polyester/nylon and canvas.

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Safety

As a safety feature, most hoists have an emergency stop button. Hoists should also have an emergency lower mechanism which allows the user to be safely lowered if the battery charge is insufficient to operate the handset.

Some hoists also have a manual override that allows the attendant to lower the user gradually in the event of an actuator or electrical failure, where the other emergency lower mechanism will not work.

It is not recommended that a hoist be used to transport a user for any distance (i.e. - from one room to another).

Thorough assessment of client's and carer's needs and the environment is necessary to choose the most suitable hoist and sling.

Any person considering use of a hoist should receive manual handling training from a therapist prior to using a hoist.



Indigo has a large range of equipment on display and products available to trial. Our experienced health professionals can provide strategies and advice on the right product for you. Please contact us using the details below for further information or to book an appointment. Appointments can be conducted by phone, email, face-to-face or video call.

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