

Tips For Interacting with a person with a...



Mobility Impairment

People who have limited mobility may lean on a door for support as they open it. Pushing the door open from behind or unexpectedly opening the door may cause them to fall. Even pulling out or pushing in a chair may present a problem. Always ask before offering help.

Do not push or touch a person's wheelchair; it is part of the person's personal space. If you help someone down a curb without waiting for instructions, you may dump her out of the chair. You may detach the chair's parts if you lift it by the handles or the footrest.

When talking to someone who uses a wheelchair, grab your own chair and sit at her level. If that is not possible, stand at a slight distance, so that she is not straining her neck to make eye contact with you.

People who use canes or crutches need their arms to balance themselves, so never grab their arms.

People that use wheelchairs are people, not equipment. Do not lean over someone using a wheelchair to shake another person's hand or ask a person using a wheelchair to hold coats.

If you offer a seat to a person who has limited mobility, keep in mind that chairs with arms or with higher seats are easier for some people to use.

Falls may be a problem for people with limited mobility. Be sure to set out warning signs after washing floors. Put out mats on rainy or snowy days to keep floors as dry as possible.