

How to Perform Baby Caretaking Tasks to Avoid Injury

Watch video demonstrations on Instagram:
@ergonomicmama

In general...

- Bring shoulder blades together before lifting baby
- Exhale when lifting baby
- Lift baby straight up and down (AVOID lifting baby side to side)
- Move your feet to turn while holding baby (AVOID twisting your trunk)

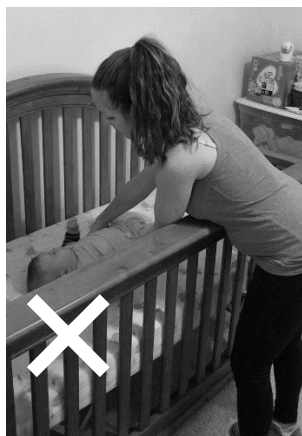
Lifting baby out of crib

Crib Set-Up

- Raise crib mattress to the highest level possible where baby is still safe
 - Lower mattress when baby can roll and again when infant can pull to stand
- Avoid positioning crib in the corner of a room as that makes reaching the child harder

Lifting baby out of crib

1. Stand angled towards the crib and partially squat to reach baby
2. BEFORE lifting baby, slide baby along the mattress to be closer to you
3. Lift baby out of crib, keeping your back straight and head looking forward



✗ Lifter too far from crib ✓ Lifter close to crib

✗ Baby too far from lifter ✓ Baby slid closer to lifter

Getting up from floor with baby

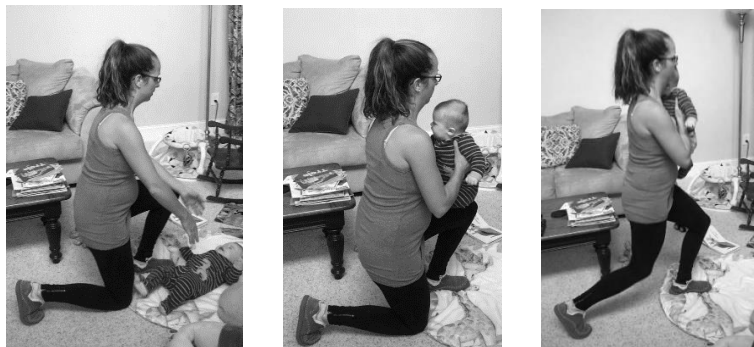
Powerlift – Good choice for young babies that do not yet have head control

1. Squat as low as possible, keeping back straight and head looking forward
2. Pick up baby and hug baby close to your chest
3. Stand up using your leg strength, keeping back straight and head looking forward



Tripod lift – Good choice for older babies who have developed head control

1. Kneel to reach baby
2. Bring baby to sit on your knee (keeping your back straight)
3. Stand up in a lunge position



Coffee table support – Good choice for older babies who have developed head and trunk control

1. Start kneeling on ground next to baby
2. Set baby onto a nearby coffee table, supporting baby with your hands
3. Stand up while keeping a hand on the baby for baby's safety
4. Squat to lift baby up from coffee table



Managing car seat

Lifting baby out of car seat

1. Place one foot inside car door to bring your weight closer to baby
2. Lift baby and hold close to your chest, keeping back straight
3. Move your FEET to turn away from the car instead of twisting at your waist
(Reverse steps for putting baby into car seat)

Carrying car seat

- Avoid carrying baby in car seat for long periods of time as it can strain your back
Option 1: Carry car seat in front of you, holding it with both hands and keeping your back straight (best method)



Option 2:

1. Loop arm through the car seat handle
2. Turn palm of hand to face away from you and grasp the side of the car seat
3. Stand with car seat



Changing baby's diaper

Table Set-Up

- Adjust table height so that baby is at your natural elbow height and you don't have to stoop to change diaper




Changing diapers

- Rest the front of your pelvis against the changing table to bring your weight closer to baby
- Prop one foot on base of changing table or on its bottom drawer to bring your body closer towards baby



Carrying baby

Carrying baby in your arms

<u>Avoid</u> sticking your hip out to support baby as that strains your back	<u>Instead</u> , carry on side with hips centered, supporting baby with both arms	<u>Best</u> for your back is holding baby in front of you
		

Carrying baby with soft carrier/sling

- Wear baby on your front, facing you, until baby is 3 months old with head control
- Slowly build up to carrying baby for longer periods of time in a carrier
- Carriers with wide straps over both shoulders are preferred to those with thin or cross-body straps

Placing baby in soft carrier:

1. Put carrier on
2. Pick up baby and sit baby on a high counter
3. Place baby into carrier (lowest part of baby's bottom should be at the level of your waist)
(Reverse steps to take baby out of carrier)



Carrying baby with framed backpack

- A framed backpack can be used when baby has full head and trunk control
- Weight of entire backpack (including backpack, child, and other items) should not be more than 30% of your body weight

Placing baby in framed backpack:

1. Place empty backpack on a high counter
2. Lift child and secure child in backpack
3. Put backpack on

Breastfeeding

- Switch breasts within each feeding session
- If using bottle, switch bottle-holding hand and baby's orientation halfway through session

Seated

- Sit on a high-backed chair with lumbar support to help you sit on your "sit bones"
- Use a U-shaped nursing pillow to bring baby to breast
- Avoid slouching and rounding shoulders to bring breast to baby
- Place a rolled-up towel under baby's head to bring baby even closer to breast



If having tailbone pain:

- Use a coccyx cut-out tailbone cushion such as this "Kabooti" cushion
- This is preferable to a donut cushion as it more specifically relieves pressure off the tailbone



Side-lying

- Place a pillow under your head, back, and between your legs for support
- Support baby's back with your bottom hand



Reclined

- Place a pillow under your head for support



Post-nursing exercise for achy back and arms

1. After nursing, stand with your back and head against a wall
2. Slide your arms up and down along the wall as if making a snow angel (try to keep your back, head, and arms all touching the wall throughout the movement)
3. When your arms are directly overhead, hold that position for 10 seconds
4. Repeat 10-15 times

