

Patient Safety Alert

September 27, 2022



Improper wheelchair use can cause significant harm to patients or staff.

Wheelchairs are one of the most common assistive devices used in healthcare facilities, but improper use can cause a catastrophic injury to patients, visitors, volunteers, or staff.

This alert was prompted by an event reported to the Pennsylvania Patient Safety Reporting System (PA-PSRS) in 2022 in which a patient's finger was amputated while opening a wheelchair.

Not knowing how to unfold a wheelchair or where to place your hands when sitting in one can cause injuries such as cuts, loss of nails, broken bones, and even amputation—sometimes affecting more than one digit. Reading and following the owner's manual before using a wheelchair is one of several ways you can prevent injury to patients and staff.

Download Safety Alert: [Wheelchair-Related Harm](#)

Read and share the article "[The Hidden Risk of Wheelchair Use](#)" in the September 2022 issue of *Patient Safety*

Print [wheelchair tags](#) alerting patients and staff to the risks

Watch the PSA's new [wheelchair safety video](#)