

Caregiving: Helping Someone Get In and Out of a Car

When you're helping someone get in and get out of a car, know that you're helping them stay safe from a fall or an injury.

But many people think that the way to help a person get into the car is by guiding or holding onto the person while he or she stoops in and moves sideways.

This is unsafe for both of you.

Here's how to do it safely and more easily.

This is Lena and her daughter, Diana.

Let's watch how they do it.

First, Diana covers the car seat with a piece of plastic or vinyl, like a grocery bag.

It will make a fabric-covered seat easier to slide on.

You may need to move the seat up or back to get the right amount of space.

Now, Diana has Lena turn and face out, away from the open car door.

Diana guides Lena to back up slowly until the backs of her legs touch the door frame.

Diana reminds Lena to reach back and hold on to the back of the seat or the dashboard.

It's important to hold onto something stable.

So when it's you helping someone, make sure that they're not reaching for the open door or the headrest.

And here's a tip.

There are tools that you can put in your car that can make this easier.

You can find them at medical supply or auto stores or online.

Now, Lena slowly sits down, still facing out of the car.

Diana makes sure that she won't hit her head on the doorframe.

Now comes the turn.

As Lena turns, she lifts one leg at a time into the car.

You may need to help your person by lifting each leg.

To help a person out of the car it's the same, but in reverse. [tape rewinding] [laughs] No, not like that.

Diana opens the car door.

Lena turns to face her.

And as Lena turns, she lifts one leg at a time out of the car.

Remember, you may have to help.

Again, Lena holds the back of the seat.

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When Lena's feet are flat on the ground and about shoulder's width apart, she stands up slowly.

Diana gives Lena some time to be sure she feels balanced and ready to go.

Helping a person in and out of a car may not always be easy, but it's a caring act that goes far to prevent a fall or an injury.