

Mobile Cart Safety

Professionals in the health care industry may use medical carts, mobile carts or workstations on wheels, all of which come in many different sizes and shapes . However, they all have common hazards and safety issues that you need to be aware of.

Don't use the wrong cart

It is extremely important that you use the right cart for the job at hand. Carts can be improperly loaded for the worker, or the environment they're in. Carts can hurt an employee due to the extra effort required to handle it. Also, large carts can be an issue in congested work areas, or areas that may not be kept clean and clear.

Keep design in mind

Carts should always have enough room to hold all of your supplies, while still allowing easy access to its contents. Also make sure to always use a cart for its intended purpose. Never let people ride a cart unless it was designed to carry people.

Check the floor

As you choose a cart for your job, be sure to check the floor and surfaces that you'll be working on. That way you'll be sure to choose a cart with the best wheels. Larger and harder wheels are the easiest to use and require less force to push. Steel wheels are the easiest, followed by hard rubber and plastic. Soft rubber wheels are the hardest to push. Using swivel wheels can also make it easier when navigating tight spaces. If you'll be pushing the cart long distances, you may want two swivel wheels and two straight wheels to make it easier to handle the cart.

Safety features

- Wheel-locking mechanisms are needed to park a cart. Be aware when you are parking a cart that you are not blocking a walkway, exit or doorway. If you'll be parking the cart on a slope or ramp, extra braking features may be needed.
- Handles should be on the back of the cart and at a height that is comfortable for pushing. It is easier on your back and body to always push a cart instead of pull. If you do have to pull a cart, keep it by your side instead of behind you to avoid twisting your back.

Be aware of your load

Make sure that your cart is not overloaded. If you do, it can obstruct your view and make it harder to push the cart. Also, make sure you're not trying to carry extra items when you're pushing your cart. Keep both hands on the handle.

Maintain your cart

Whenever you get ready to use a cart, inspect it to make sure it's in proper working order. Pay close attention to wheel bearings, which need to be maintained and replaced if they are damaged.