



### ***A Consumer's Guide to Selecting A Lift Chair***

Selecting the right lift chair is as important to some end users as selecting the right physician. There are many models of lift chairs available from a variety of manufacturers, just as there are many physicians out there who can treat the same ailment or disability. But the question as to which lift chair will give you the comfort and performance you need is as complicated to answer as asking which doctor will give you the type of care that you need. There are several questions to ask when selecting a lift chair for yourself or as a gift for a loved one:

**How much does the person who will use the chair weigh?** The right fit is critically important when it comes to lift chairs, more than for any other piece of furniture. Make sure the chair has the proper weight capacity. If someone weighs 280 lbs. and a chair's weight capacity is 300 lbs., then it would be wise to consider a chair with a higher weight capacity to accommodate for future weight gain. The person's height is another important factor when considering the right lift chair. When the chair is fully reclined, the person's head should lay comfortably on the headrest, with their feet positioned just off the footrest. When seated, they should be able to sit comfortably back against the backrest, with the front edge of the seat positioned just behind their knees and their feet resting comfortably on the floor. Lift chairs are available in weight capacities up to 700 lbs. and come in a variety of sizes for people of different heights.

**How will the chair be used?** If the end user will spend a majority of the day in his lift chair and/or sleep in it every night, then a lift chair that offers infinite positioning – where the backrest and footrest operate independently of one another – should be selected. Infinite position lift chairs allow users to lay flat and adjust the angle of the backrest and footrest independently in small increments to find a position that will be the most comfortable for long term daily use.

**Why does this person need a lift chair? Is it to relieve a temporary health issue or is it for a permanent disability?** If the end user is recovering from a knee or hip replacement, and plans in the future not to rely on the lift mechanism to get up and down from the chair, then selecting a less expensive, two-position chair with basic features would most likely suffice. However, if the end user is suffering from a permanent disability, or a progressive illness, it would be recommended for them to purchase a lift chair that has additional options that they may need in the future, such as infinite positioning.

**How much space is available in the room where the lift chair will be placed?**

Depending on the size of the lift chair and whether it has a two-position, three-position or infinite position design, a lift chair can need as much as 18” to 22” of space from the wall to achieve a full recline, as well as the clear space in front of the chair to recline fully. Some manufacturers offer models that require only 6” of space from the wall for a full recline, but the chair will extend farther out front as it is fully reclined. It is highly recommended that the end user try the chair and check the manufacturer’s specifications for the overall length of the chair when fully reclined to make sure it will fit in the room where it will be used.

**Are there incontinence issues or other issues in place that would impact the type of fabric selected for the chair?** In the lift chair world, selecting the right fabric is more than just finding a color that matches someone’s décor. Fabric is a key component of selecting a lift chair, particularly for someone who is incontinent or will spend many hours each day in their lift chair. Some manufacturers offer fabrics with stain protection; or vinyl fabrics that will reduce the amount of moisture that passes through the fabric to the foam inside the chair. Check with your dealer regarding the types of fabric available and how easily they can be cleaned.

**What is the difference between a two-position, three-position and infinite position lift chair?** A two position chair has a sitting position, and does not allow for independent movement of the backrest and footrest. A two-position chair is generally a manufacturer's most economical chair sold at their lowest price.

A three-position chair offers a seated position with a slight recline of the backrest; as well as a recline position.

An infinite position chair allows for a larger range of motion between the backrest and footrest so that the chair can recline back to a full sleep position. Some manufacturers offer an advanced infinite position chair that allows for the backrest to recline and place the user's head below the feet into the Trendelenberg position, which has numerous health benefits to relieve swelling in the lower extremities, improve circulation and increase breathing capacity.

**What are the warranties and what type of service will I get after the sale?**

Every manufacturer has different product warranties, so check that carefully with your dealer or through the manufacturer's website. Higher quality chairs (which tend to be the most expensive) offer better warranties on their wooden frame, lift mechanism and electronics. Be sure you understand from your lift chair provider how they work with the manufacturer in the event of an issue with your lift chair.