

## Hints and Tips for use of grabbers or reachers

If you are unable to bend down to pick up small objects from the floor such as paper, cutlery, knitting needles, remote controls etc; due to pain, dizziness or breathlessness, then 'grabbers' and 'reachers' may be useful. They can also be used to:

- > Help you get dressed, e.g. for pulling up skirts, trousers/pants, shorts or tights
- > For some gardening tasks such as picking up and placing seedlings
- > Doing the laundry to hang up light items.

Please be aware that if you regularly feel dizzy when you tilt your head forward you should be careful when using a 'reacher'. If you have a painful shoulder you could try picking the item up with the 'reacher' and then placing it on a table instead of bringing the 'reacher' towards you to retrieve the item. Once within reach it will be easier to pick it up off the table.

### Equipment

'Reachers' come in different lengths so choose the length which is going to be the most useful for you (be aware that the longer the length, the heavier the item you are picking up will feel).

The magnet supplied on the end of many 'reachers' is useful for picking up very light metal items such as paper clips, pins and needles.

### Useful Information

It is important not to use a 'reacher' beyond its stated maximum pick-up weight.

**IMPORTANT** – Do not use the magnet near magnetic media such as floppy discs, tapes etc. as it could cause the information on them to be wiped.

Do not attempt to pick anything up that is fragile with the 'reacher' as the jaws may damage the item.

Always try to get as close as you can to an object before you pick it up i.e. do not overstretch. 'Reachers' can be used by right and left-handed people so when you first get it, it is important

that you learn how to use it in the hand that is most comfortable for you, especially if you experience pain in your hands or you have a weak grip.

## **Safety**

DO NOT use 'reachers' to take items out of high cupboards or to pick up relatively heavy things such as cans of soup or beans. Place those items at the back of your work surface so all you have to do is slide them towards you. Arrange your cupboard so the items that you use most often are at the front on the lower shelves.