

Rehab TIP SHEET #2

Assisted Pressure Relief

Pressure relief is essential for preventing skin breakdown and keeping the skin tissue healthy. An important aspect of patient care is assisting with pressure relief.

- Steps for Assisting with Pressure Relief using a Wheelchair Tilt Method;

1. Park wheelchair on a solid non-moving surface.
2. Set the wheelchair locks.
3. Turn the wheelchair anti-tippers up. There is a button to release the anti-tippers underneath or on the side of the bar on the back of the wheelchair.
4. Set the wheelchair approximately 3 feet away from the non-moving surface.
5. Inform the patient that you are going to tilt him/her backwards for a pressure relief.



6. Place your foot underneath the wheelchair on part of the frame to get leverage while you tilt. Slowly tilt the wheelchair back until the back of the wheelchair is resting on your lap. Stay tilted for 2 minutes.
7. Return the person back to a sitting position monitoring the patient for dizziness or lightheadedness. If symptoms occur, slowly tilt the patient back again. After 1 or 2 minutes, slowly raise the patient back to a sitting position stopping in 1/3 increments on the way up for 1-2 minutes.
8. Place the anti-tipper bars back down and unlock the wheel locks on the wheelchair.
9. Repeat these steps every 20-30 minutes unless otherwise instructed by a therapist or doctor.

How to position a person in bed

Many materials may be used for positioning on a bed, but the two most common materials used for positioning are pillows and towel rolls. Only dry, clean pillows, pillowcases, and towels should be used. To make a towel roll, simply flatten a towel on a clean surface and roll to form a cylinder. Towels can be stacked or folded and then rolled if a larger roll is desired.

Side-Lying

1. If the patient is not mobile, reach across the patient by bending at the knees and hips to grasp the draw sheet on the opposite side. Pull the sheet close to your stomach and stand up using your legs. If the patient can move, ask him/her to bend knees, push with foot, and reach across with the opposite arm until they are on their side. →



2. When not using a draw sheet, reach over the patient's knees with one arm and bend the patient's legs to about 45°, or until they can lie unsupported. Make sure that the patient is lying on their shoulder blade and **NOT** on their arm or shoulder. ←
3. The arm on the bottom should be perpendicular to the body, with the forearm bent or straight. ↓
4. Make sure that the patient's head is in the middle of a pillow and that his/her head is even with the center of their body.
5. Place a pillow between the patient's knees so that the hip and knee are evenly aligned to prevent pressure areas between the knees.
6. Gently lift the arm on top, being careful to not pull on the shoulder. Place a pillow folded in half underneath the forearm. The upper arm should be supported by the patient's torso.



Reminder

- Lift with your legs by bending at your knees and hips. Keep your spine straight.
- Keep the patient as close to your body as possible while lifting to avoid muscle strain.
- A “draw” sheet can be folded in half and placed underneath the patient to help move up, down, left, right, or roll in the bed.