



A program of Choices Healthcare

Repositioning a Patient in Bed

Patients who are confined to bed should be turned and repositioned every two to three hours, if tolerated, for comfort. This helps to prevent bedsores and stiffness. Using a lift sheet could make moving and turning the patient easier, and it reduces the chance of injuring yourself or the patient.

To make a lift sheet, fold a single flat sheet in half and then in half again. Place the sheet smoothly on the bed with the top at the shoulders and the bottom below the knee.

When moving a patient up in bed, try to have two people to lift whenever it is possible.

- Remove all pillows except for the one at the head of the bed.
- If the bed is adjustable, lower the head of the bed to a flat position, if the patient can tolerate it.
- If using two people, stand on opposite sides of the bed with your feet about shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent.
- Grasp the lift sheet at the shoulder and hip level.
- If the patient can bend their knees, ask them to do so. Count to three, lift, and shift the patient toward the head of the bed.
- Once the patient has been lifted in the bed, adjust, and add pillows and bring the head elevation back to the patient's comfort.

If only one caregiver is available:

- Lower the head of the bed, stand at the head of the bed, and grasp the lift sheet at the shoulders.
- Keep your feet shoulder-width apart and your knees slightly bent and pull the sheet toward the head of the bed.
- Make sure you count to three so that the patient knows when to expect the movement.
- Once the patient has been lifted in the bed, adjust, and add pillows and bring the head elevation back to the patient's comfort.

To turn a patient to the side in bed if a helper is available:

- Stand on opposite sides of the bed.
- With the patient lying flat, grasp the lift sheet firmly on each side, count to three, and lift and move the patient to one side of the bed.
- Gently roll them onto their side by moving the shoulder and the hips at the same time, facing the patient away from the side you just shifted them towards.

If a helper is not available:

- Stand opposite to the side of the patient that you will be rolling the patient towards.

- Use the lift sheet to gently move the patient to the side of the bed, and then move to the opposite side of the bed. Firmly grasp the lift sheet behind the patient, at the level of the shoulders and hips.
- If the patient can hold onto the side rails of the bed, have them do so to help you. Gently roll the patient toward you.

Once the patient has been repositioned, place a pillow at the back and a flat pillow between the legs to prevent pressure on the bony areas of the knees and ankles. You can place a pillow under their arm for comfort and to prevent pressure at the elbow.

Once you have repositioned the patient, make sure that their blankets are loose so that they can move around freely. Ensure that no body part is placed over another to prevent pressure or friction with movement. Also, ensure that nothing is obstructing the nose or mouth of the patient.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the 24-hour number at (877) 506-0149.