

TOPIC:

Positioning in Bed After Stroke



Positioning in Bed After Stroke



A stroke can impact a person's ability to position themselves in bed due to:

- weakness (hemiplegia)
- changes in sensation and body awareness
- altered muscle tone

Careful positioning can:

- improve joint alignment
- Increase awareness of the affected side
- reduce fatigue
- improve comfort and safety

Positioning in Bed After Stroke



What you should know:

- ✓ A stroke can cause a lack of sensation. It is important to monitor the skin for redness or signs of skin breakdown
- ✓ After a stroke, a person's sense of where their body is in space can be decreased. This can make positioning difficult
- ✓ Development of shoulder and/or arm pain is common after a stroke. Support the affected arm to prevent pain and injury

Positioning in Bed After Stroke



What you should know:

- ✓ Proper positioning can increase comfort and safety
- ✓ A comfortable position can help ensure proper rest, and assist with fatigue throughout the day
- ✓ Positioning the person on the affected side for a period of time can increase circulation, sensation and awareness

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Smart Tips:

Before You Start



- Explain to the person what you are going to do and encourage them to participate
- Ensure you have everything you need to position the person safely
- Use good body mechanics to avoid injury

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Safety Considerations



- Take your time. Position the person by moving slowly and gently, be mindful of the person's arm as you move
- Avoid pulling on the person's affected shoulder/arm as this can cause irreversible injury
- Ensure the head of bed is at the recommended height

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Safety Considerations

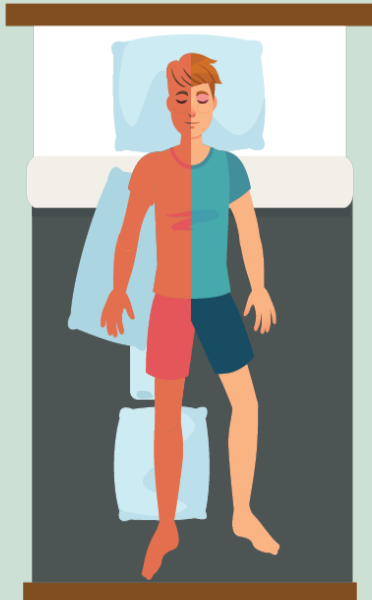


- Ensure necessary items are within the person's view and reach (on the unaffected side)
- Check that the person is comfortable before you leave the room
- Check on the person regularly and offer position changes frequently

Positioning in Bed After Stroke



Positioning on Back



- Center head and shoulders in the bed
- Support/elevate affected arm on a pillow, positioned slightly away from the body
- Place the palm down with fingers straight
- Place folded towel beside affected thigh to prevent leg from rolling outwards
- Use recommended equipment to reduce pressure under heel if needed

Positioning in Bed After Stroke



Lying on Affected Side



- Ensure the person is **not lying directly** on top of their affected shoulder.
- Support the unaffected arm forward on a pillow
- Place a pillow lengthwise behind their back so the person does not roll backwards
- Position the person with both legs bent, pillow in between knees and ankles

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Lying on Unaffected Side



- Support the affected arm forward on two pillows
- Elevate the hand as needed, with fingers spread
- Place a pillow lengthwise behind their back
- Position the person with both legs bent at the hips and knees
- Place a pillow in between knees and ankles

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Seek extra support

- ✓ All team members have a role to play in positioning a person with stroke
- ✓ Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists are skilled in positioning

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