

How to Position a Bedridden Person

From an article by [Juliet Myfanwy Johnson](#)



Imagine you are comatose or injured and have to lie in bed 24 hours a day with no way to move your body. This will help you see the importance of having someone around to reposition a bedridden person. A comatose person is one who won't complain and is usually the first to be ignored or neglected as far as repositioning. It's just easier to leave someone on their back and not bother with them, and this is when breakdown of tissues and skin begins quickly. If you reposition a bedridden person every 2 hours, you raise their heart rate and relieve pressure on the underlying body parts, stimulating them and providing their body with the healthiest possible resting environment and preventing bedsores.

Instructions

1. Lay the bed as flat as the person can tolerate while still breathing comfortably.
2. If the person is on a draw sheet, pull the sheet toward you, bringing the person as close to the side as possible. Pull the sheet over them to gently roll the person onto their side. Without a draw sheet, you can use your hands to reach over the person and encourage the body to roll towards you.
3. Once the person is on their side, pull both knees forward a bit, with the top knee higher than the bottom. Put a pillow between the knees, calves and under the top foot, to keep the pressure off the bottom leg, and for maximum comfort. This is called an abductor pillow.

4. Reposition your person every 2 hours, from side to back to other side. This will stimulate heart rate and breathing, both great ways to keep blood going and to keep the person as healthy as possible. The interaction with you will also give the person the vital reassurance of human touch.

5. Check for any redness or skin breakdown if a person has been left in one position for longer than 2 hours. Especially on the back, since laying on the back puts all the pressure on the buttocks and skin breaks down easily from that much pressure, as well as causing soreness.