

❖ Repositioning in the Wheelchair

Often patients slide out of their wheelchair and need repositioning. Most families and staff are taught to reposition someone in the chair by coming around behind them and "lifting" them back into the wheelchair. This is not only dangerous for your back, but it can cause injury to the patient's shoulder and it teaches the patients nothing about normal patterns of movement.

Analyzing Normal Movement in Repositioning

Most people reposition themselves in the chair in one of two ways, both are completely normal.

Method 1

1. The feet are repositioned behind the knees.
2. The person leans forward, far enough to shift their base of support from their hips to their feet (until their hips clear the chair), and no further.
3. After their hips clear the chair and while still leaning forward, the knees extend and the hips come back into the chair.

Method 2

1. The feet are positioned on the floor under or behind the knees.
2. The person leans slightly forward, in order to move away from the back of the chair.
3. The person shifts to one side, putting the majority of weight onto one hip and unloading the opposite hip.
4. The hip that has been "unweighted" comes back.
5. The opposite hip now becomes "unweighted" and comes back.

Remember that in both methods, the hip (or hips) are unweighted before repositioning in the chair.

⌘14 Pause and Practice with a Partner

Self Experience

Note your own sequences of movements.

Observe and Analyze Others

Note variations in movements and sequences of movements.