

FAM-HELP Instructions for Mobility at Home

Exercise and Walking Assistance

Bedrest interferes with the function of major body organs and leads to generalized deconditioning including loss of muscle strength, balance, and endurance. Keeping older people upright, moving and walking regularly can prevent serious complications.

Purpose: The goal of the early mobilization program is to keep older adults physically moving. For those that are able, walking assistance three times a day is recommended. For those who are unable to walk, simple exercise movements called active range of motion exercises should be performed three times a day. Walking at least 2-3 times a day is essential for physical and mental well-being. Walking helps to prevent loss of muscle mass and flexibility, which happens very quickly when older adults are confined to bed.

Procedure:

1. Be sure your family member is able to get out of bed and walk and that there are no objects or furniture in the way.
2. Assist them to sitting position:
 - a. Ask them to roll onto side, slide legs to edge of bed, and then lower legs over edge of bed.
 - b. Ask them to push up to the sitting position by pushing the elbow of one arm and palm of the other into the bed.
 - c. Allow them to sit at edge of bed for a few minutes to prevent dizziness. Encourage them to pump ankles up and down to stimulate circulation.
3. Help put on non-skid slippers/shoes.
4. Assist your family member to standing position:
 - a. Ask them to slide or scoot to edge of bed.
 - b. Have them position feet flat on floor directly under knees.
 - c. Have cane/walker readily available, if needed.

- d. Allow family member to stand a few minutes to gain balance. Encourage them to stand erect with head up, shoulders back and back straight.
6. Assist your family member to walk:
- a. If needed, support with your arm behind their waist.
 - b. Follow, walking behind and to one side.
 - c. Encourage them to walk normally; do not rush. Stay with them at all times.
 - d. Walk only as far as they feels comfortable. Remember to start return trip before they are fatigued.
 - e. Return family member immediately for dizziness or weakness.
7. Return family member to bed:
- a. Have them stand at side of bed, near top of bed so their head can easily reach the pillow.
 - b. Ask them to back up to the bed until they feel the backs of their legs reach the side of the bed.
 - c. Ask them to reach back one hand at a time to edge of the bed.
 - d. Bend waist, hips and knees and lower slowly to a sitting position.
 - e. Have them scoot buttocks back so they are firmly seated away from the edge of mattress.
 - f. Once safely seated, remove slippers and have them swing legs back up onto bed.
8. Make sure you are able to hear your family member if they call for help or need assistance.