

# Keep me moving



## Five things you should know about keeping patients moving

**1** Patients who are immobile are at highest risk of developing pressure ulcers.

**2** Regular movement or turning the patient regularly will redistribute pressure and help prevent pressure damage.

**3** Patients who are being cared for on a support surface still need to be repositioned.

**4** Manual handling aids should be used when moving patients to avoid dragging the patient along the mattress, which can cause skin damage.

**5** Repositioning the patient is not always easy. Your safety and patient comfort are important.



### GREEN

**Patient is fully mobile:** Encourage daily exercise with regular activities.



### AMBER

**Patient needs assistance:** Encourage frequent repositioning to improve circulation and reduce time spent on damaged area.



### RED

**Patient is immobile:** Reposition the patient at regular intervals. Use a repositioning chart and select an appropriate support surface.

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## How to help patients keep moving

### 1 Reposition or turn the patient frequently

- Use wedge/pillow to maintain 30 degree side lying position.
- Use a thin pillow to relieve sacral pressure.
- Raise head of bed less than 30 degrees.
- Ensure that you are not putting the patient into a position that will put pressure on another body part.

### 2 How often should patients move?

- Patients who are able to get out of bed or their chair should be encouraged to do so whenever possible.
- Teach patients to change position (offload) every 15 minutes – these movements need only be small but may give a significant difference in pressure.
- For patients who need help, reposition at least every 2 hours – eg on their **left side**, then on their **back**, then on their **right side**, all at **two-hourly** intervals.
- Reposition immobile patients in chairs at least hourly.
- Time spent on damaged area should be kept to a minimum.

### 3 Tell others what you are doing

- Document positions used and frequency of repositioning.
- Document reasons for support surface selection.



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