

## FAST FACTS: Positioning

**Positioning:** Assisting your loved one to stay in a comfortable position.

### ✓ Benefits of Positioning:

- Helps with pain management
- Decreases risk of complications such as bedsores
- Helps maintain range of motion

### ✓ Guidelines for Positioning and Stretching:

- Use pillows to support your loved one
  - When your loved one is laying on their side, make sure their ear is flat on the pillow and not turned under. When your loved one is laying on their side, make sure their ear is flat on their pillow
  - A full body pillow can be used to position your loved one on their side.
- Gently bend and straighten arms and legs while helping your loved one turn – don't force joints or muscles beyond a place of comfort).
  - Use your loved one's reactions as a guide for what is comfortable.
- If your loved one is able to sit up, suggest they pretend to "write" the alphabet in the air using their feet or arms to support stretching and range of motion.
  - They can alternate arms or feet writing six letters at a time
  - Example: Right Foot- A, B, C, D, E, F  
Left Foot- G, H, I, J, K, L



✓ **What Else Should You Do:**

- Consider using a [Pain Diary](#) to note important information on a regular basis (i.e. document your pain level prior to repositioning and after)
- Consider using this and/or other non-drug treatments and document the impact on your pain in your Pain Diary

**Reference:**

1. Adapted from: Fouladbakhsh, J.M., et al., Nondrug therapies for pain management among rural older adults. *Pain Manag Nurs*, 2011. 12(2): p. 70-81. 2. The Nursing Home Pain Management Algorithm Clinical Trial, R01 NR009100, 7/1/05 – 4/30/10; Mary Ersek (PI) Used with permission of Mary Ersek and HPNA (2009).

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