

FAST FACTS: Non-Drug Treatment: Positioning

Positioning means assisting your loved one to change to or 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.
 - 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; do not 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 You Should Do**

- Write down and share information about your loved one's pain with their healthcare provider.
- Use a [Pain Diary](#) to note important information useful to the healthcare provider.
- Encourage your loved one to try a non-drug treatment and document the impact on their pain in their Pain Diary.

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Reference

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).