FAST FACTS: Positioning as Nondrug Pain Treatment

**Positioning:** Assisting the individual to stay in a comfortable position.

**✓ Benefits of Positioning:**
- Helps with managing pain
- Decreases risk of complications such as pressure ulcers (bedsores)
- Helps maintain range of motion

**✓ Guidelines for Positioning and stretching**
- Use pillows to support yourself while laying down or in a sitting position if needed.
  - A full body pillow can be used to assist in positioning when you are laying on your side
  - When you are laying on your side, make sure your ear is flat on the pillow and not turned under
- Gently bend and straighten arms and legs when you change positions (do not force joints or muscles beyond a place of comfort)
- If you are can sit up, pretend to “write” the alphabet in the air using your feet or arms when you change positions to support stretching and range of motion
  - You can alternate arms or feet writing six letters at a time

**✓ 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

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**Adapted from**
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).