

Information on why we lie a patient on their front (prone)



i Important information for
patients who need to lie on
their front

About this booklet

This booklet gives you information about why we lie patients on their front (prone) patients in Adult Critical Care.

What is proning?

Lying prone is when we place a ventilated patient on to their front. The process of getting a patient onto their front is known as proning.



Why do we turn patients into the prone position?

Some Critical Care patients who are very sick develop problems with their lungs which makes it very difficult for them to receive enough oxygen.

One of these problems can be a condition known as Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS).

Lying a patient on their front can help to improve ventilation and get more oxygen into the body. Research has shown that in some severe cases of ARDS, turning a patient in to the prone position can improve chances of survival.

How long we turn patient prone

Patients are usually placed in the prone position for between 16-20 hours. After this time the patient is turned into another position to continue their treatment. It may be necessary to repeat the proning process a number of times. In some patients proning may not be effective.

Problems that occur with proning

When a patient is nursed in the prone position, they can develop swelling to their face and eyes. However, this will settle down in time once a patient is on their back.

Is this painful for patients?

This position should not be painful for patients, but staff will continuously monitor the individual and the amount of sedation and pain relief which is required.

Further information

If you have any questions, please speak to a member of staff, they will be happy to discuss this.

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