

Tissue Viability Service

30° tilt method - a pressure relieving position



What is the 30° tilt method?

The 30° tilt method is a safe and easy way to provide pressure relieve without lifting. It is safe and comfortable for patients and carers.

Recumbent (flat) position

1. Use one or two pillows to support the head and neck.
2. Roll the patient towards you.

Place the first pillow underneath the bottom head pillow (A) at an angle and position the corner of the pillows carefully to fit the small of the back (B).

This will 'tilt' the patient onto one buttock and lift the sacrum clear of the mattress.

Gently roll the patient onto the pillows.

Ensure there is clearance between the sacrum and the mattress, checking with your flattened hand - you should be able to easily put your hand in the slight gap created.

3. Support the full leg along the length of another pillow.

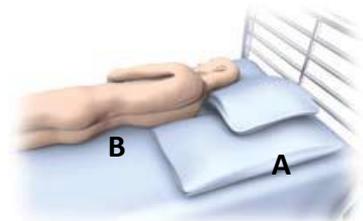
Ensure the pillow is moulded around the leg and that the heel overhangs the edge of the pillow.

4. Use the third pillow to fill any unsupported areas over the length of the other limb.

The gaps to be filled are usually in behind the knee and around the Achillies tendon.

The edge of the pillow (about one inch in depth) is all that is normally required.

However, if the limb is preferred to be flexed, then a thicker pillow may be required to ensure full limb support.



The full recumbent 30° 'tilt' position.



5. This shows the necessity to use an extra pillow to provide support to the feet.

Using the knee-breaks on the bed can also be used to help with this and to make the patient more comfortable.



6. Variant position – an alternative position for patients who cannot achieve or maintain normal posture.



Semi-recumbent position

1. Supports the lumbar spine. Plump or fold the lower pillow if necessary.



2. Place an extra pillow under the buttock to 'tilt' the body, giving the bony areas (ischial tuberosities) and sacrum clearance.



3. Ensure that the heels are clear of the mattress. Use the knee-break in the bed.



4. This is the full semi-recumbent 30° tilt' position.

Do not forget to use the knee-break on the bed rather than a pillow.



Further protection to vulnerable heels and elbows can be provided by the use of padded boots/gel heel pads.

The use of a bed cradle will help to reduce any extra pressure on the feet caused by the weight of some bedclothes.

For impartial and confidential advice or information on the services provided by Bridgewater or to receive this leaflet in an alternative format call our Patient Services team on 0800 587 0562.



Diagrams provided courtesy of
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bchft.enquiries@nhs.net • www.bridgewater.nhs.uk • Headquarters: Spencer House, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire, WA3 7PG

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