

BODY MECHANICS

OBJECTIVES/RATIONALE

Health care providers must know how to properly apply the principles of body mechanics to minimize personal and client injury. Students must be able to identify, demonstrate, and practice principles of body mechanics.

TEKS 121.3 1G

TAKS ELA 1, 4

KEY TOPICS

- I. Terms relating to safety and body mechanics
 - A. Body mechanics: using all of body parts efficiently to safely lift and move
 - B. Body alignment: refers to correct positioning of head, back and limbs
 - C. Posture: position of body parts in relation to each other
 - D. Mobility: the ability to move
 - E. Balance: the ability to maintain a steady position that does not tip
 - F. Body support: a device used to support body at work to reduce damage when lifting, moving and transferring patients.
- II. Rules for proper body mechanics
 - A. Use stronger, larger muscles to perform tasks which require physical effort
 - B. When moving a heavy object, try to push or pull instead of lifting the item
 - C. Get help if object feels too heavy to lift
 - D. Lift in a smooth motion to prevent injury
 - E. Maintain good posture
 - F. Avoid twisting the body
 - G. Bend knees, keep back straight, spread feet about one foot apart, use leg muscles when lifting
- III. Conditions which affect moving, lifting, transferring of clients
 - A. Obesity
 - B. Fragility
 - C. Amputation
 - D. Paralysis
 - E. Extra equipment needs
 - F. Altered level of consciousness
 - G. Language barriers
 - H. Hearing or vision loss

ACTIVITIES

- I. Discuss and demonstrate safe ways to use the body as a mechanical tool
- II. Demonstrate principles for proper body mechanics. Body mechanics checklist
- III. Formulate a plan of action to move clients who have conditions that complicate or inhibit movement.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Bed and linens; (table tops can suffice as beds for teaching purposes if necessary.)
Chair or wheelchair

ASSESSMENT

Body mechanics check list

ACCOMMODATION

For reinforcement, students who cannot lift, move, or transfer clients will make posters to illustrate proper body mechanics.

For enrichment, students will develop a care plan for a client at home who needs mobility assistance.

REFLECTIONS

Body Mechanics Check List

- A. Moving a patient up in bed when the patient can help the care giver
1. Identify the patient and address the patient by name.
 2. Introduce yourself and explain what will be done
 3. Wash your hands.
 4. Provide privacy by closing door or pulling curtains
 5. Raise the bed to a working height if possible (hospital bed)
 6. Lower the head of the bed if the patient can tolerate being flat
 7. Use the pillow to pad the head of the bed if the patient does not require it under the head
 8. Provide for safety of the patient by raising far side rail, but leave near rail lowered
 9. Ask patient to bend knees and place feet flat on the mattress
 10. Position the far arm so the patient can help “push off” if able
 11. Position near arm under your arm with the hand on your shoulder, if possible
 12. Slip your arm under the near arm with hand under shoulder
 13. Place your other arm under the neck and shoulders
 14. Count to three then lift the patient up (to wash back, fasten gown, etc or to slide up in bed)
 15. Provide support as the patient returns to supine position
 16. Check to see that patient is comfortable and that the spine is straight
 17. Reposition pillow under head, straighten bed linens, place call light within patient’s reach
 18. Raise near side rail if indicated
 19. Return bed to lower position
 20. Open screen curtain
 21. Wash your hands
- B. Moving a helpless patient in bed
1. Ask a co-worker to help you move patient
 2. Identify patient and address by name as you explain what you are doing
 3. Introduce yourself and the one who is helping
 4. Wash your hands
 5. Provide privacy with closed door or screen curtain
 6. Check that bed is securely locked and locked wheels if necessary
 7. Raise bed to working height if possible
 8. Flatten head of bed if condition of patient allows that
 9. Move pillow from under patient and position it at the head of bed next to the headboard
 10. Position worker/assistant on other side of bed, opposite you
 11. Ask patient for help if able to do so
 12. Place your feet about 12” apart with one foot pointed toward the head of the bed and the other foot pointed toward the side of the bed. Bend your knees and keep back straight

13. Place one arm under the shoulder nearest you and the other under the hips. Ask your coworker to do the same on the opposite side
14. Lock arms with the co-worker under the patient's hips and shoulders
15. Ask the patient to bend slightly and raise both knees
16. Explain that on the count of three, you and co-worker will lift patient toward head of bed. Ask patient to help by pushing with both feet
17. At count of three, lift patient up in bed
18. Repeat as necessary to move patient up
19. Replace pillow under head and check for comfort
20. Straighten linens and place call light where patient can reach it
21. Raise the side rail as indicated by patient's condition
22. Lower the bed if reasonable
23. Open screen curtain
24. Wash your hands