

PRONING THERAPY

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP DURING THIS TIME?

As a family member, friend or loved one of the patient during this stressful time it is important to still take care of yourself. Make sure you are getting enough to eat and enough sleep.

The patient is most likely on multiple forms of life support and the room can become crowded. It's important to try to declutter the environment of your belongings as much as possible in case there is an emergency.

Playing music at a reasonable level (at the discretion of your nurse) may be soothing for the patient and for the loved ones at the bedside.



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WHAT DOES THE WORD PRONE MEAN?

The patient will be turned onto their belly to allow their lungs to better deliver oxygen to their blood stream.

WHAT DOES THIS PROCEDURE INVOLVE?

The patient will have an endotracheal tube (ET tube or breathing tube) inserted so a ventilator can breathe for them.

They will be sedated to an appropriate level before they are paralyzed so the ventilator can do all of the work for them. This allows time for the lungs to heal.

A central line may be placed for adequate IV access along with an arterial line which will give us a continuous blood pressure reading.

The patient will be rolled onto their stomach with the help of multiple nurses, a respiratory therapist and their doctor, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner at the bedside.

You will be asked to step out of the room during these procedures as some of them are done under sterile conditions. It is also important for the staff to be able to focus with minimal distractions.

HOW LONG WILL THEY STAY LIKE THIS?

The typical time frame is 18 hours prone (on their belly) and 6 hours on their back.

This procedure may be repeated multiple times until blood oxygen levels improve. These time frames may also vary depending on what else is happening with the patient.

ONGOING CARE

Every few hours the patient's head will be turned to help prevent skin breakdown on their face. You may be asked to step out of the room during this time as well.

Special pads and pillows are used to also help prevent skin breakdown.

The patient will have a urinary catheter so we can closely watch their urine output and so they remain dry.

