

Assessing Range of Motion and Strength

Nurse 1: Hi Candace.

Nurse 2: Hi Wendy. What are you going to show us today?

Nurse 1: Well I'm going to show you how a nurse would assess a range of motion and strength with Sheri today.

Nurse 2: So why do we need to do that?

Nurse 1: Well it's important to know a patient's range of their joints and if they have full capability of movement and also to assess their strength and there's a couple of reasons not only for assessing but also if a patient's bed bound or bedridden and we need to assess for pain and also what we need to make sure that they're moving those joints on a regular basis and not letting their muscles deteriorate while they're in bed.

Nurse 2: I thought physio did this.

Nurse 1: Well sometimes physio will do it depends where you go. Some rural hospitals might not have physio available or if it's weekends or nights. It's still our job and we still do that. Okay. All right. Sheri How are you?

Patient (Sheri): Good.

Nurse 1: So today we're just going to assess your range of motion and we're going to start first head to toe. We'll start at the top and so I'd like you to do first for me is we'll just do some range of motion of our neck and our head. We're just gonna go side to side. Good. And then with our chin to our chest we're down. Back. And the last thing we're going to assess is your range from side to side. Good. And if I want to assess strength they would place my hand here and ask Sherry to turn her head that way and I could assess the strength of her neck. Good.

So I'll get you to stand up. You can have your arms out in front of you. We're going to assess some shoulder joints. Then to the side and we can assess right up to the top. Good. And then down. Then we can assess one full range of our joint all the way around. And the other side. Good. And I would be asking if there is any pain or movement while Sherry's doing each of these to see if she's having any pain during that rotation. Good. So if I want to assess your strength Sherry I'm going to place my hands and ask you to push up against my hands. Great. And then down. And then you can push. Just keep them like that and you push in. Great. And then out. Awesome.

And let's assess your spine now so I can get you to bend over. I want to stay in front of you so I can see if there's nice alignment. Good. And then backwards. Lean back. Great. And then we'll do some side. Wonderful.

I'll get you back in bed and we'll assess our lower half. OK Sherry so next thing we're going to do is assess range of motion of your lower half. We're going to start with your knees. So bring your knees up to your chest if you can. Great. And we'll do the other leg. Wonderful. And then I'd like you to lift this leg up. This one. Good. And I would ask if you have any pain or discomfort in your hips or your knees while we're doing that as well.

Okay so we're going to lift this foot up and press it and I'm going to hold here. Press against me. Good. Same with this one.

Push down with your leg. Great. And push down. Awesome.

So let's take a look at extension of your feet as well. So pull your toes towards you.

Then we're going to assess range of your hip joints. You're going to move your leg out this way. Same with this one. And then I'm going to get you to push against my hands. That same motion. Great. And then pull your legs in. Wonderful.

So Sherry those are some exercises you can be doing while you're in bed. You don't need to wait for physio to come in and do those with you.

Nurse 2: So now that we've seen how a nurse can assess a range of motion or assist a client to do those range of motion what do we have to do for documentation.

Nurse 1: Well when we document we always want to be comparing side to side. So if there's any side that is weaker than the other side or the range of motion is not as significant. We're going to be documenting those differences.

Nurse 2: Did you just do that narrative notes or is there or flow sheet or does that depend on the facility depends on where you're going.

Nurse 1: Absolutely.