
Learning About Changing Your Position for Breathing



What are proning and repositioning?

Proning and repositioning your body may help you feel better if you have mild trouble breathing. Changing positions can help your lungs work better. You rotate through positions in bed: lying on your belly ("proning"), on your right and left sides, and sitting up.

How do you prepare?

It's important to do proning and repositioning only after talking with your doctor. You need to be able to move your body around in bed by yourself. Don't try a position if it's uncomfortable. Reasons for this may include:

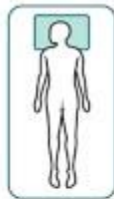
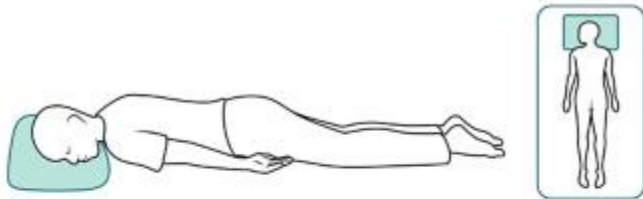
- Recent belly surgery.
- Weakness or pain anywhere.
- Any condition that may make it hard to lie on your belly or sides.

How is it done?

Before you start, get some towels and pillows ready to help support you and make you comfortable when you lie in these positions.

Stay in each of these positions for 30 minutes to 2 hours. The amount of time that's right for you depends on your doctor's advice and how long you can stay comfortable. If any of these positions start to hurt or make your breathing worse, stop and try another one.

Lie flat on your belly.



© 2021 Healthwise

slide 1 of 4, Lie flat on your belly.,

Putting rolled-up towels or pillows under your hips and head may help make you more comfortable.

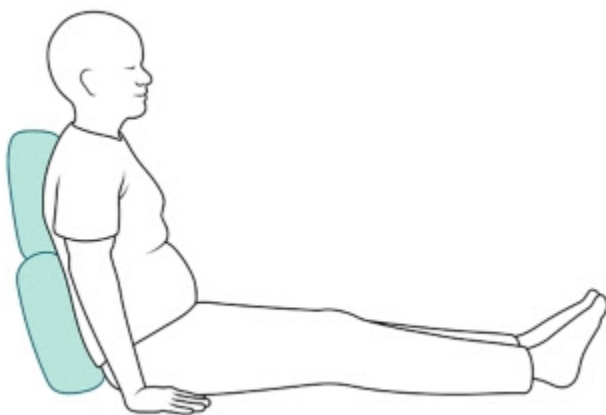
Lie on your right side.



© 2021 Healthwise

slide 2 of 4, Lie on your right side.,

Sit up in bed or in a chair.

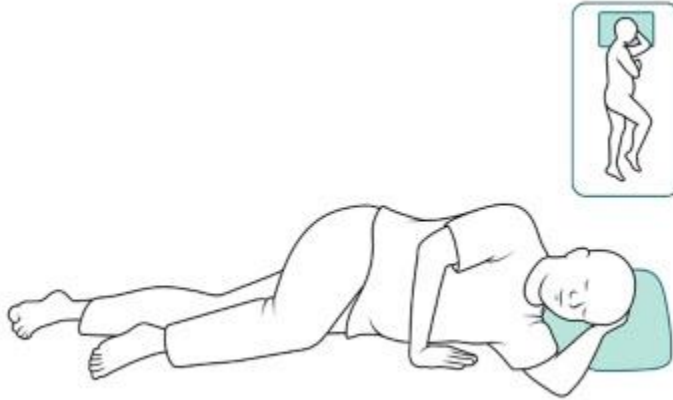


© 2021 Healthwise

slide 3 of 4, Sit up in bed or in a chair.,

Try not to slouch.

Lie on your left side.



© 2021 Healthwise

slide 4 of 4, Lie on your left side. ,

Repeat the positions as needed or as your doctor tells you.

When should you call for help?



Call 911 anytime you think you may need emergency care. For example, call if you have life-threatening symptoms, such as:

- You have severe trouble breathing. (You can't talk at all.)

Call your doctor now or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have moderate trouble breathing. (You can't speak a full sentence.)

Watch closely for changes in your health, and be sure to contact your doctor if:

- Your symptoms get worse.