PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

Advanced Bed Exercises

This information describes how to do advanced bed exercises that will increase your strength and help you move more freely.

You may need to modify or skip some of the exercises if you have certain conditions, such as:

- Blood clots
- Broken bones
- Weakened bones
- Recent surgery on your spine, arms, or legs

Your healthcare provider will tell you which exercises you can do. If you have any concerns, talk with your healthcare provider.

You should also tell your healthcare provider if you have new or increased pain while you're doing these exercises. You should feel no more than slight strain as you do them. They shouldn't cause pain.

If you have chest pressure, dizziness, or shortness of breath, stop doing the exercises. Call 911 if your symptoms don't stop after you rest.

Please visit www.mskcc.org/pe/advanced-bed-exercises-video to watch this video.

Advanced Bed Exercise Tips

- Try to do the exercises for 30 seconds.
- If you need to stop before 30 seconds, that's OK. Just be ready to start the next exercise on time.
- You should rest for 30 seconds before you start each exercise.
- Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth while exercising.
- Don't hold your breath. Count out loud to keep your breaths evenly paced
- If you're in a hospital bed, raise the head of the bed. Then place pillows behind you.
- If you're at home, place pillows behind you.

Exercise Items

You should have the following items nearby before you start the exercises:

- Socks
- Pillow

Combined Ankle Pump, Quadriceps Set, and Buttock Squeezes

1. Lie back with your head and shoulders supported on pillows.
2. Point your right toes up toward your nose, push the back of your right knee down into the bed while tightening the muscles on the top of your thigh, and squeeze your buttocks (butt muscles) together (see Figure 1).
3. Hold the position and count out loud to 3. Then relax.
4. Repeat with your other leg.
5. Repeat steps 2 to 4 for 30 seconds, if you can.
6. If you'd like to challenge yourself, you can do this exercise with both legs at the same time.

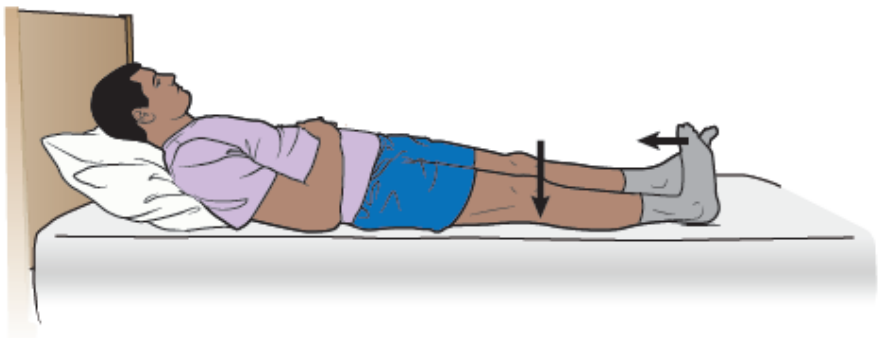

Figure 1. Combined Ankle Pump, Quadriceps Set, and Buttock Squeezes

Bridging

1. Lie back with your knees bent and feet shoulder width apart. Keep your arms at your sides (see Figure 2).
2. Tighten the muscles in your abdomen (belly) and buttocks.
3. Push through the heels of your feet and lift your buttocks as

high as you comfortably can (see Figure 2).

4. Hold the position for 5 seconds, if you can.
5. Slowly lower your buttocks back onto the bed.
6. Repeat steps 2 to 5 for 30 seconds, if you can.

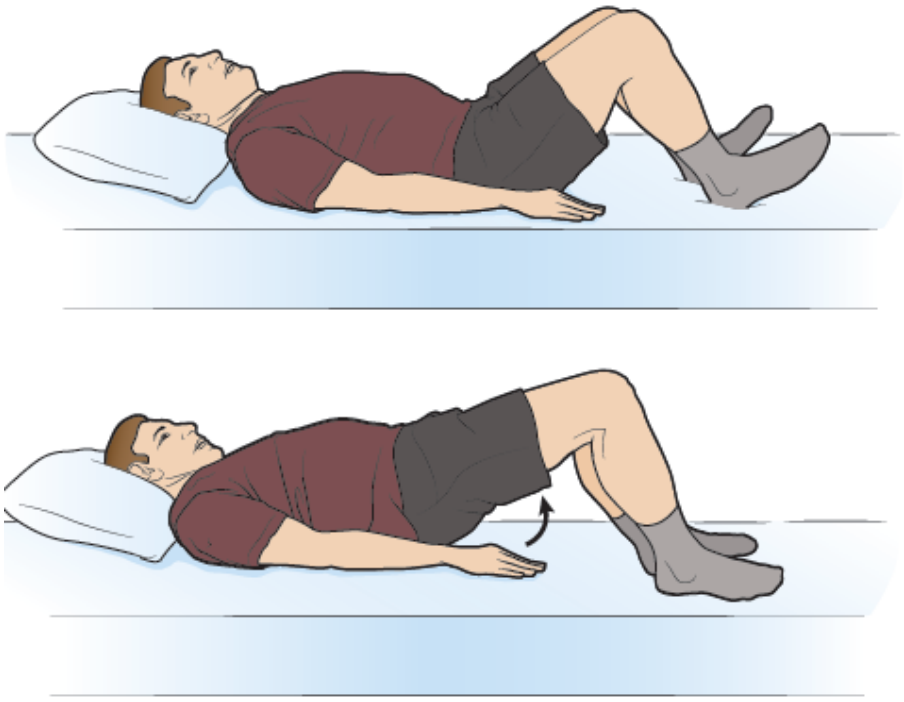

Figure 2. Bridging

Rolling Side to Side, Alternating

1. Lie back with your head and shoulders supported on pillows.
2. Bend your right knee. Place your right foot flat on the bed (see Figure 3).
3. If you're in the hospital, with your right arm, reach across to the left bedrail and roll to your left side. If you're at home, try to touch the bed on your left side. Let your right knee fall to your bed, keeping your leg bent. This will keep your shoulders and hips pointing in the same direction, which protects your spine. (see Figure 3).

4. Let go of the bedrail, raise your right knee off the bed, and roll back onto your back.
5. Lower your right leg. Relax.
6. Repeat the exercise with your left arm and leg.
7. Repeat steps 2 to 6 for 30 seconds, if you can.

Figure 3. Rolling Side to Side, Alternating

Clamshells

1. Lie on your side with your head and arms supported on pillows. Keep your legs bent and knees and ankles together.
2. Keeping your ankles together, slowly raise your top knee (see Figure 4). **If you have a urinary catheter attached to your thigh, be careful not to pull on it as you lift your leg up.**
3. Slowly close your legs and return to the starting position.
4. If you'd like to challenge yourself, let the heel of your top leg rise off the bottom foot, or straighten and raise your top leg.
5. Repeat steps 2 to 3 for 30 seconds if you can.
6. Turn over to your other side. Rest for 30 seconds, then repeat

the exercise.

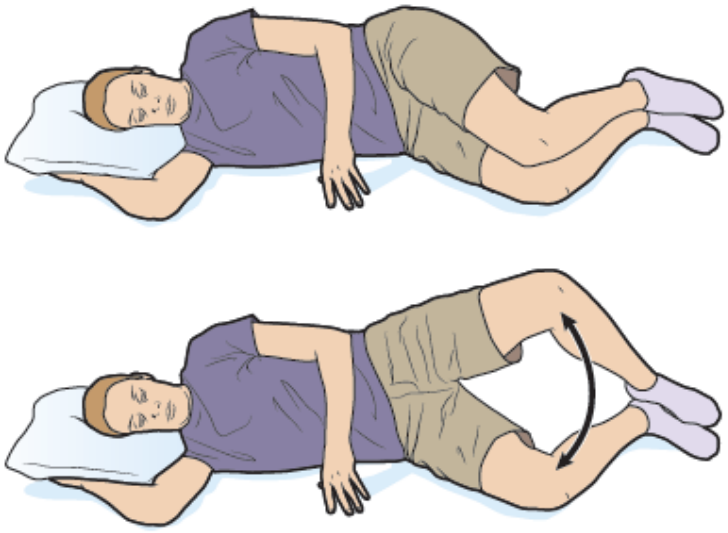

Figure 4. Clamshells

Total Body Stretch

1. Lie back with your head and shoulders supported on pillows.
2. Start with your arms at your sides. (see Figure 5). Slowly raise your arm while you breathe in for 4 seconds, point your toes down, and tighten your thigh and buttock muscles.
3. Hold your breath for 8 seconds, if you can. Keep your arms on the pillow so they're near your ears (see Figure 6).
4. Breathe out through pursed lips (like blowing out candles) for 8 seconds as you lower your arms and relax your legs.
5. Repeat 3 times, if you can.

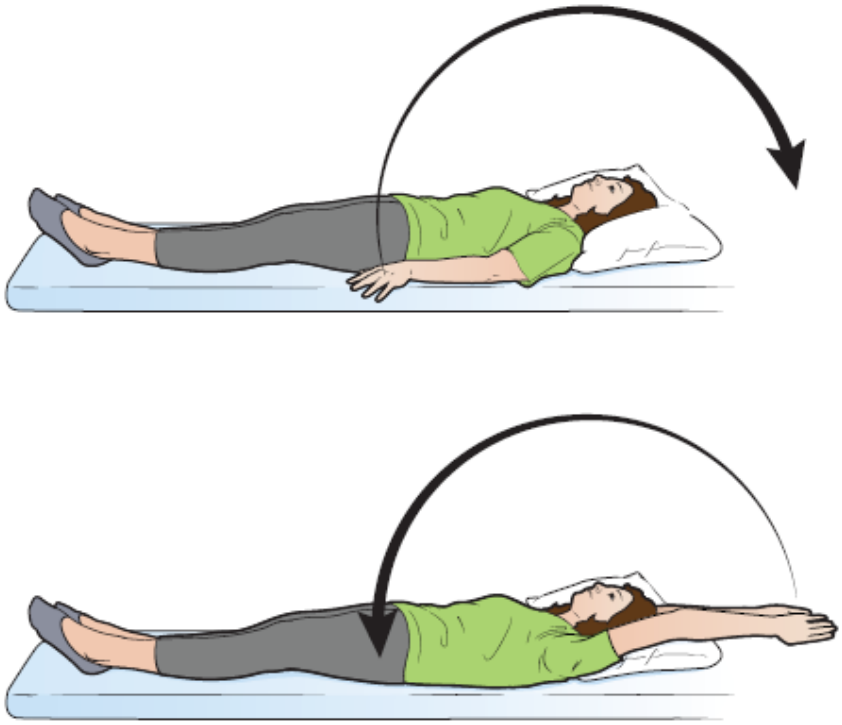

Figure 5. Total Body Stretch

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit www.mskcc.org/pe to search our virtual library.

Advanced Bed Exercises - Last updated on August 3, 2026

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