

How to use a Single-handle Bed Pole

A bed pole helps someone move safely from lying to sitting on the edge of the bed and from sitting to a standing position. Following these instructions will help you assist someone to use a bed pole.

Safety Warning

Bed poles are **not safe** to be used if the person using the pole:

- only has a light mattress (e.g. hospital bed, foam mattress or waterbed) as there needs to be enough weight to keep the bed pole secure
- has a bed with an elevating bed-head (e.g. hospital bed)
- has a history of falling from bed
- has a bed that has been lowered to the ground
- has difficulty remembering or understanding instructions
- is weak or unsteady on their feet
- is on medication that may cause weakness or confusion.

Note: if there is a decline in the health of the person, using a bed pole may no longer be safe. Contact your nurse or health professional.

Before you start

- Always check with your nurse or occupational therapist before using a bed pole.
- The bed pole is placed in-between the mattress and the bed base.
- There should be no gaps between the mattress and the pole.
- Always have someone help you to lift the mattress when positioning the bed pole under the mattress.
- If the bed has wooden slats, the pole may need to be taped to the slats.
- Place the pole at the side of the bed approximately at elbow level when lying down.

Further information

Contact your nurse or occupational therapist if you require further assistance.

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Place bed pole in between mattress and bed-base at approximately the person's elbow when lying in bed.



Make sure there is no gap between bed pole and mattress.

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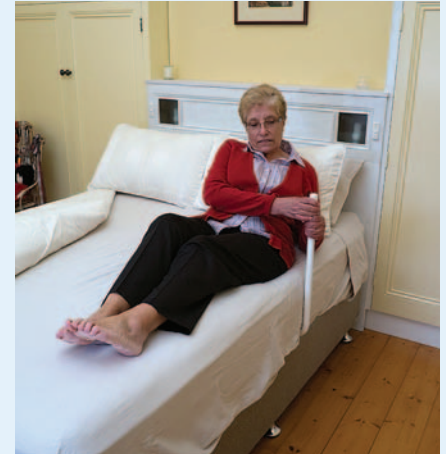
- Adjust the position of the bed pole after trying it out for the first time if needed.
- Check each day that the bed pole is in the correct position with the pole directly upright and against the side of the mattress.

Moving from lying to sitting

- 1 The person reaches for the bed pole.
- 2 The person pulls themselves up using both hands from a lying to a sitting position.

Moving from sitting to lying

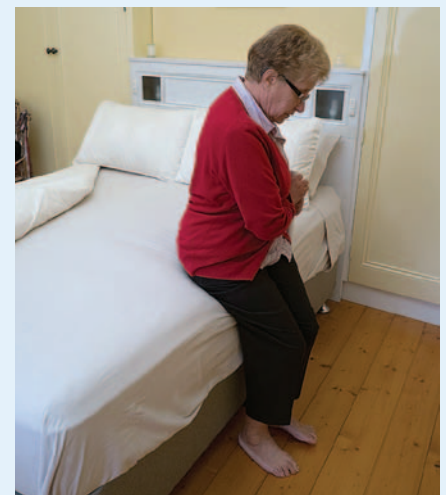
- 1 Have the person sit beside the bed pole and grab hold of it.
- 2 The person uses the bed pole to lower/lever into a lying position.
- 3 If a person has difficulty lifting their legs up onto the bed, you may help them to lift their legs.
- 4 Ensure that you lift one of their legs at a time.
- 5 Make sure that you do not strain your back by squatting (bending at the knees) to lift their legs.
- 6 Never let the person you are assisting hold or hug you around your neck while you are helping them.
- 7 If you have any difficulty or concerns contact your nurse.



Reach for bed pole with both hands to lift from bed.



When sitting up, use bed pole to swivel to the edge of bed.



Place feet firmly on the floor before getting up.

Loddon Mallee Regional Palliative Care Consortium

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