

## MANAGING INCONTINENCE FOR THOSE WITH DIFFICULTY GETTING OUT OF BED



This AARP Home Alone Alliance<sup>SM</sup> video is in two parts. The first part shows how to make a bed while the person is in it. The video shows a hospital bed, but the steps are similar for any bed. The second part shows how to help a person transfer (move) from a bed to a commode (a moveable toilet).

### Supplies for Changing a Bed

- > Laundry bag or basket
- > Clean top and bottom sheets
- > Clean pillow cover
- > Gloves (not shown in the video, but they may be helpful)

### Steps for Changing a Bed When a Person Is in It

- > Have supplies ready and tell the person what you'll be doing.
- > Put the gloves on and remove the blankets and top sheet.
- > Loosen the bottom sheet from all sides of the bed where it's tucked under the mattress.
- > Gently and carefully roll the person to the side of the bed away from you.
- > Roll the bottom sheet lengthwise toward the person, but stop just before it touches the person.
- > Spread out half of the clean sheet on the side of the bed you just cleared. The other half of the clean sheet should be in a small mound in the middle of the bed. Don't let the clean sheet touch the rolled sheet.
- > Gently roll the person toward you, over the rolled sheet and the mounded half of the clean sheet.
- > Remove the rolled sheet and put it in the laundry basket.
- > Spread the rest of the clean sheet over the other side of the bed.

- > Gently roll the person away from you and back into the middle of the bed.
- > Remove the gloves, then cover the person with the top sheet, change the pillow cover, and tuck the clean sheet under the mattress on all sides.

### Moving a Person from a Bed to a Commode

- > Have the person sit on the edge of the bed and say what you'll be doing.
- > Put on a transfer belt or harness if available or needed.
- > Pull the commode close to the bed and place it sideways next to the person (against a wall for support if possible).
- > Place the person's outside leg (the one farthest from the commode) between your knees for support.
- > If you're not using a transfer belt or harness, put your hands under the person's underarms.
- > Make sure the person places her hands by her side and helps push off the bed.
- > Bend your knees and keep your back straight.
- > Count to three, then both of you slowly stand up together, using your legs to lift—not your back.
- > Pivot (turn) the person so her back is toward the commode.
- > Lift the person's nightgown or robe out of the way.
- > Once the backs of the person's legs are touching the edge of the commode, ask the person to start reaching for the commode armrest, then bend your knees to lower the person onto the commode.

You may want to review the video a few times to get the steps straight in your mind. If you're uneasy, ask someone—preferably a nurse or home care aide—to help you so you don't hurt yourself while helping your family member.

For more information and videos on mobility, visit the Home Alone Alliance page on the AARP website at <https://www.aarp.org/nolongeralone>.

Remember to take care of yourself as you help your family member. Find someone to talk to about your own feelings about handling this care. Look for support groups and message boards where people in similar situations share their experiences and suggestions. You are not alone!

*AARP Public Policy Institute  
Prepared by Carol Levine, United Hospital Fund*