

5b: Insertion and removal of slide sheets

© 2019 Clinical Skills Limited. All rights reserved

Remember:

- All carers must be trained and competent
- Check the moving and handling plan
- Complete checks on equipment
- Obtain consent from the person to be moved
- Perform hand hygiene
- Use personal protective equipment where required
- Communicate a clear explanation to the person to be moved
- Maintain the person's privacy and dignity
- Agree commands with assisting carers: e.g., "Ready, steady, move"
- Leave the person safe on completion of the task
- Clean and tidy away any equipment used

This section describes several options for inserting and removing slide sheets, which can be applied in any manoeuvre where slide sheets are used. The option chosen will depend on the person and the environment.

The options for inserting slide sheets are:

- Unravelling them from the feet to the head;
- Unravelling them from the head to the feet; or
- Rolling the person from side to side.

The unravelling methods are particularly useful if it is difficult to roll the person or when assisting a plus-size person.

For all methods, you will need two large flat slide sheets or a large tubular slide sheet. When using the unravelling methods, prepare the sheet(s) by repeatedly folding over from one end to form a flattened tube (see inset, right). The distance from one fold to the next should be approximately 15 cm. If the folds are too large, they become difficult to manage when unravelling. When using the rolling method, gather or bunch the sheet(s) along their length before positioning them under the person.

Adjust the bed to a comfortable working height and apply the brakes of the bed before you begin.

Unravelling method: inserting sheets feet to head



Turn the slide sheet over before positioning it under the person's feet

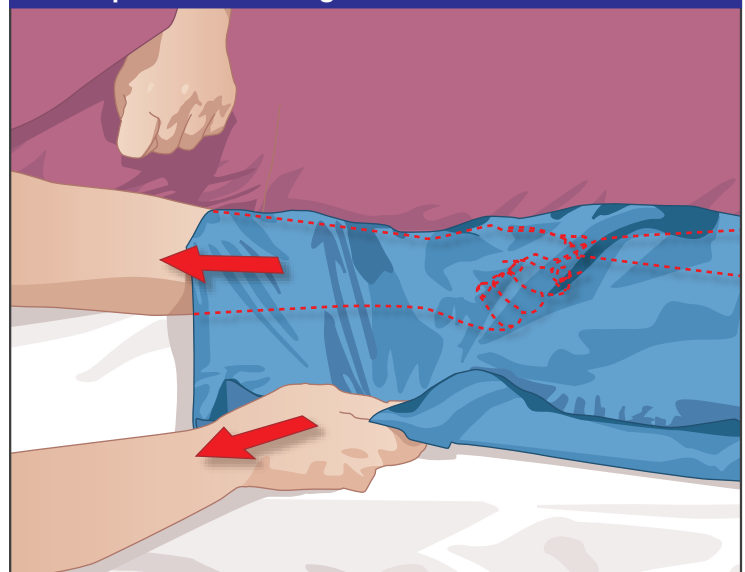
Insert the folded slide sheet (inset) beneath the person's feet and ankles, across the width of the mattress. The folded section should be against the mattress, and the loose end against the person's feet (main picture).

Unravel the slide sheet



Stand facing slightly diagonally towards the foot of the bed. Using the hand nearest the person, take hold of the folded sheets. With coordinated actions, unravel each fold, pulling the sheets taut across the bed, before moving onto the next fold.

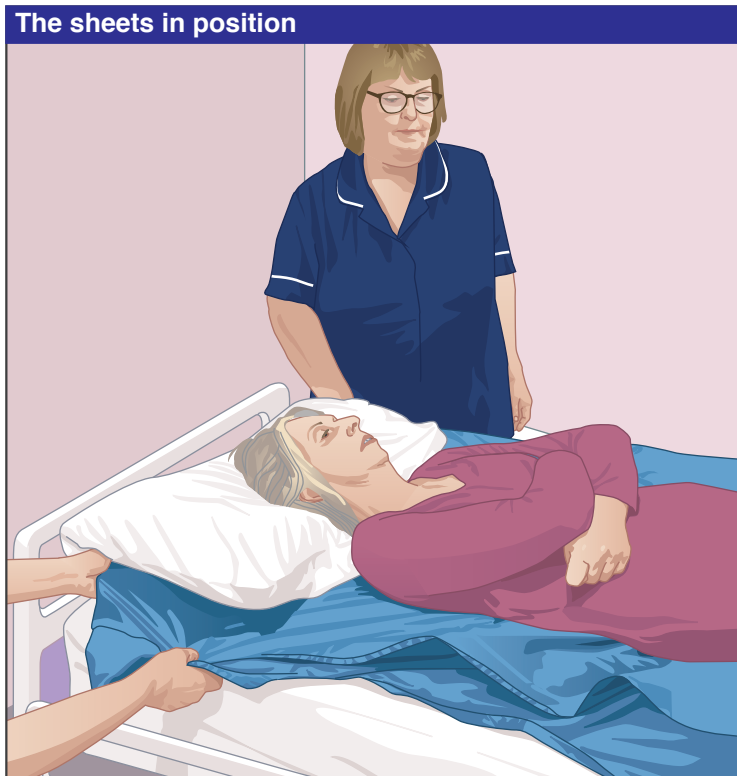
Technique for unraveling slide sheets



To unravel the sheets, slide the hand nearest to the person under the sheets to take hold of the fold and pull it up under the person, while using the other hand to stretch the edge of the sheets towards the edge of the bed.

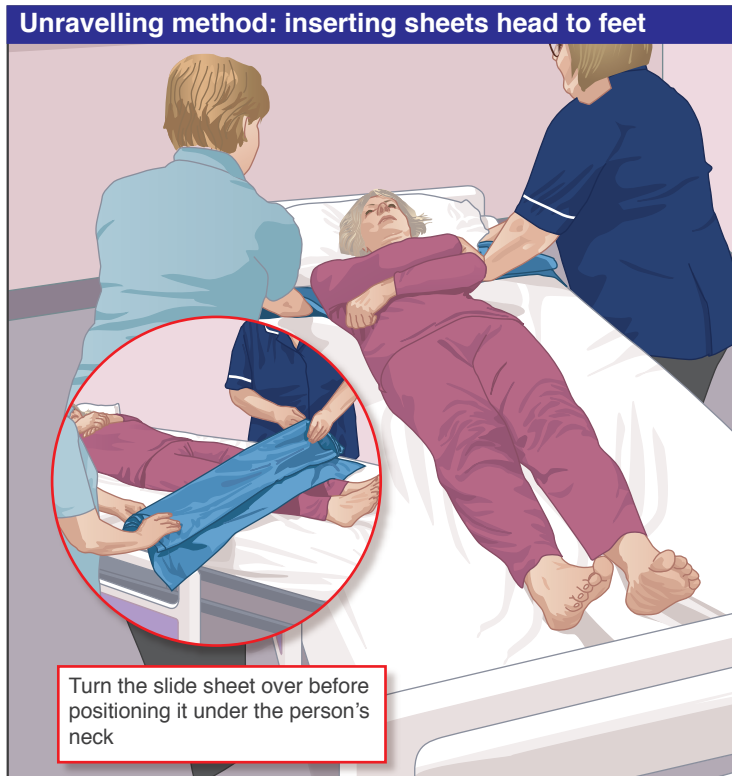
5b: Insertion and removal of slide sheets Page 2

The sheets in position



Continue to unravel the sheets until they are under the person's pillow. To move the person, simply pull on the top layer of the slide sheet in the direction required.

Unravelling method: inserting sheets head to feet



Turn the slide sheet over before positioning it under the person's neck

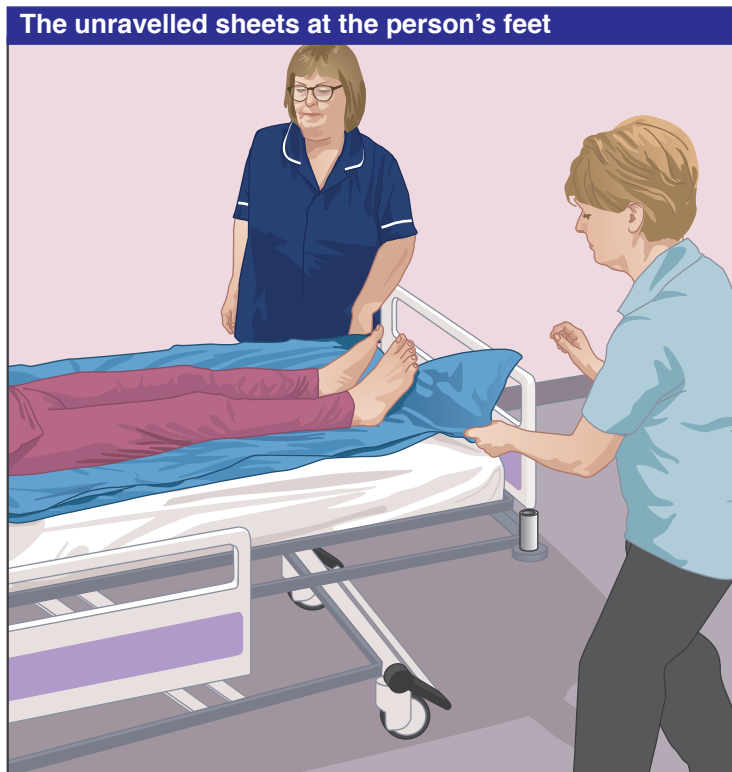
Insert the sheets through the "natural gap" at the back of the person's neck, onto the mattress. The folded section should be against the mattress, and the loose end against the pillow. Keep your hands under the sheets to prevent direct contact with the person's skin, to make it more comfortable for them. Pull the sheets across the width of the bed beneath the person's head, until they are taut, then pull them down beneath the person's shoulders.

Start to unfold the slide sheets



Stand slightly diagonally facing the head of the bed, and coordinate your actions to unravel one fold at a time as you move down the bed. Pull the sheets taut as you go, to stop them from catching on the person's clothes.

The unravelled sheets at the person's feet



Continue to unravel until the sheets reach the person's feet. To move the person, pull the upper sheet (or upper layer of a tubular sheet) over the lower one.

5b: Insertion and removal of slide sheets Page 3

To insert slide sheets by the rolling method



Assist the person to turn their head towards the direction in which they will roll. They should either place their arms across their body, bending at the elbow, or move both arms in the direction of the roll.

Assist the person to bend their leg



Assist the person to bend one leg or both legs, with a hand over the heel to protect them from friction on the surface of the bed.

Assist the person to roll onto their side



Both carers should support the person's shoulder and hip and assist them as they turn onto their side.

Insert the slide sheet(s)



One carer supports the person by placing one hand on their hip and one on their shoulder, while the other carer inserts the slide sheets.

The person rolls back



The person rolls onto their back, and one carer pulls the slide sheets through. The person may be assisted to roll onto their opposite side to make it easier to pull the sheet(s) through completely.

The slide sheet(s) in position

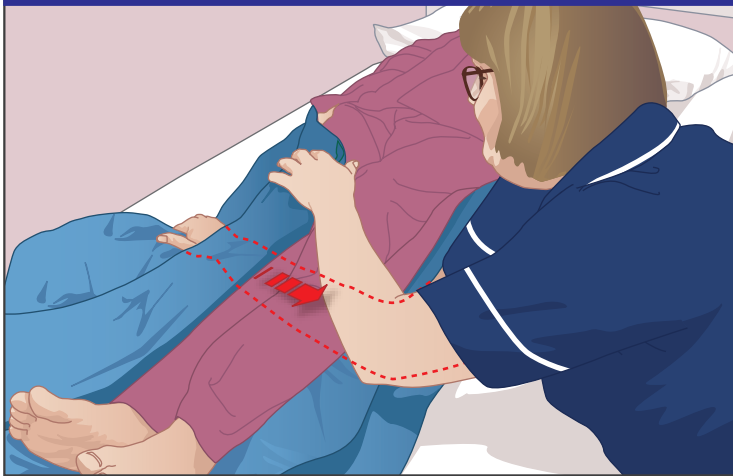


The slide sheets should be long enough to reach from the person's head to their heels, to protect all body parts from friction. If the sheets are not long enough, use an additional sheet to protect the full length of the person's body.

Do not undertake or attempt any procedure unless you are, or have supervision from, a properly trained, experienced and competent person. Always first explain the procedure to the person and obtain their consent, in line with the policies of your employer or educational institution.

5b: Insertion and removal of slide sheets Page 4

Removing a tubular slide sheet



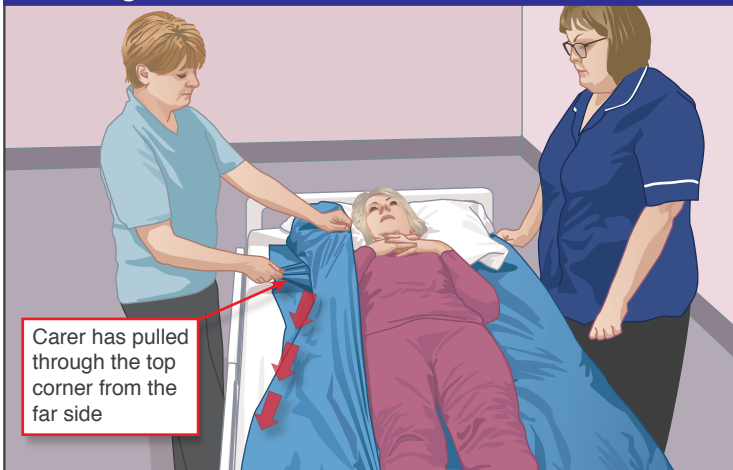
Pass your hand between the two layers of the tubular slide sheet, under the person's knees. Grasp the far edge of the lower layer of the slide sheet.

Pull the slide sheet out



Slowly pull the sheet from beneath the person. This technique works because the two sliding surfaces create little friction between them.

Removing flat slide sheets



Reaching across beneath the person's neck, grasp the top corner of the lower sheet on the far side of the bed. Then pull it back on itself beneath the person, until it is visible on the side of the bed nearest you.

Pull the bottom slide sheet out



Then pull the sheet down, turning it under and following the side seam along the full length of the person. The two sliding surfaces work together to aid movement.

Grasp the bottom far corner of the remaining sheet



Stretch your hand under the person's feet, grasp the corner of the sheet on the far side of the bed and turn it under. Pull it towards you, and work your way up the sheet along the seam. This way, the material slides over itself to reduce friction.

Pull the top sheet out



Work up to the person's head until you have removed the whole sheet, as shown. Alternatively (not pictured), you can remove the remaining sheet by pulling the sheet out only as far as the person's waist. Then reach under their neck, and pull the sheet down to their waist so that the two halves meet in the middle, at which point you can easily remove them.