Reading: The Complications of Immobility

Vocabulary

atrophy
balance
bed bound  chairbound
blood circulation
bone  bone loss  bony prominence
complication
contracture
deep vein thrombosis  (DVT)  deep vein thromboses  (DVTs)
dependence
to drag
foot drop
fracture
friction
(a) graze  to graze
immobile
impairment
kidney stone
muscle  muscle wasting  musculoskeletal
osteoporosis
permanent
pneumonia
pressure ulcer
secretion
shearing
sputum
stasis
unsteady  unsteadiness
Activity: Complete the text using terms from the vocabulary list. Check your answer with
the transcript.

Musculoskeletal complications of ____________________. Patients who are unable to move
around for even short periods of time are at risk of a number of health problems. Some of these
problems can be treated, but others cause permanent ____________ and can result in patients
becoming _______________ or chair bound.

Muscle weakness leads to balance problems and _______________. When patients try to
walk even short distances they often have the feeling that they may fall. Everyday tasks such as
washing and dressing become more difficult leading to increased ________________
on others for assistance.

Muscle atrophy or muscle wasting can cause ________________ making the front of the foot
and the toes drop forward _________________. Patients with foot drop find it difficult to walk
and tend to __________ their toes along the ground as they try to take a step.

A ______________ is the permanent bending of a muscle in the arm or leg. The muscles and
joints shorten so that it is not possible to straighten the limbs. It therefore becomes very
difficult to hold ______________ or to walk.

Osteoporosis is a _______________ which is characterised by bone loss and reduced bone
strength. Significant ________________ can result in a greater risk of bone fractures
especially hip fractures.

Pressure ulcers result when patients are unable to move around and relieve pressure over
_______________. Poor movement of _____________ patients can also cause shearing, or
friction which breaks the outer skin layer and causes _______________.

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Hypostatic ____________ is a kind of chest infection which can result if patients lie flat for a long time. ______________ pool at the bottom of the lungs because patients are not able to expand their chest muscles to breathe deeply. They may also have difficulty coughing so that they cannot clear the ____________ from their lungs.

Deep Vein Thromboses are blood clots which form in the ______________ of the legs. The blood circulation of patients who lie in bed for long periods becomes slower so that blood pools in the calves. This is known as ______________.

Patients who are ______________ have an increased risk of urinary infections, because urine tends to remain in the bladder for too long. They are also more prone to developing ______________. Patients who have urinary catheters also have a greater risk of urinary tract infection.
Musculoskeletal Complications of Immobility. Patients who are unable to move around for even short periods of time are at risk of a number of health problems. Some of these problems can be treated, but others cause permanent impairment and can result in patients becoming bedbound or chairbound.

Muscle weakness leads to balance problems and unsteadiness. When patients try to walk even short distances they often have the feeling that they may fall. Everyday tasks such as washing and dressing become more difficult leading to increased dependence on others for assistance.

Muscle atrophy or muscle wasting can cause foot drop making the front of the foot and the toes drop forward permanently. Patients with foot drop find it difficult to walk and tend to drag their toes along the ground as they try to take a step.

A contracture is the permanent bending of a muscle in the arm or leg. The muscles and joints shorten so that it is not possible to straighten the limbs. It therefore becomes very difficult to hold objects or to walk.

Osteoporosis is a bone condition which is characterised by bone loss and reduced bone strength. Significant bone loss can result in a greater risk of bone fractures especially hip fractures.

Pressure ulcers result when patients are unable to move around and relieve pressure over bony prominences. Poor movement of immobile patients can also cause shearing, or friction which breaks the outer skin layer and causes grazes.
Hypostatic pneumonia is a kind of chest infection which can result if patients lie flat for a long time. Secretions pool at the bottom of the lungs because patients are not able to expand their chest muscles to breathe deeply. They may also have difficulty coughing so that they cannot clear the sputum from their lungs.

Deep Vein Thromboses are blood clots which form in the deep veins of the legs. The blood circulation of patients who lie in bed for long periods becomes slower so that blood pools in the calves. This is known as stasis.

Patients who are immobile have an increased risk of urinary infections, because urine tends to remain in the bladder for too long. They are also more prone to developing kidney stones. Patients who have urinary catheters also have a greater risk of urinary tract infection.

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