

Section: Division of Nursing

PROCEDURE

Index: 6080.003a
Page: 1 of 2
Issue Date: April 8, 1991
Reviewed Date: July 2010

HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

Originator: K. Shubick, RN

3-NORTH
(Scope)

TITLE: APPLICATION OF PELVIC TRACTION PROCEDURE

PURPOSE: To outline the steps for applying pelvic traction.

SUPPORTIVE DATA: Indicated for treatment of sciatica, low back muscle spasms, treatment of nerve root disorders, and minor fractures of the lower spine.

EQUIPMENT LIST:

1. Overhead frame
2. One crossbar
3. One pulley
4. Traction cord
5. Large spreader bar
6. Pelvic belt
7. Weight carrier
8. Weights

CONTENT: PROCEDURE STEPS: KEY POINTS:

1. Attach basic frame setup to the bed.
2. Attach one crossbar to the foot of the bed.
3. Attach one pulley to the crossbar at the foot of the bed.
4. Measure patient's girth at the rest of the ileum to ensure correct size of the belt.
5. Apply pelvic traction so that the lower portion of the belt is at or slightly below the greater trochanter. Belt is not to be applied like an abdominal binder.
6. Attach traction cords to straps of pelvic belt, thread through pulleys, and then tie to weight carriers.
7. Apply weights prescribed by physician.
8. Weights are free hanging off the floor.

NURSE'S ALERT

1. Record type of traction applied.
2. Document patient's tolerance to weights and pain level.
3. Document neurovascular status and skin condition.
4. Medicate patient for pain to ensure patient's comfort level and document effect of pain medication.

PATIENT EDUCATION

1. Explain purpose of pelvic traction.
2. Provide instruction on what patient can or cannot do specific to type of traction.
3. Stress importance of reporting pain or pressure.
4. Encourage self-care activities to maintain mobility within traction limits.
5. Explain purpose of position changes to maintain healthy tissue, sound respirator status, elimination.