Mobility 3.2: Patient Ambulation

Hi, I'm Elise, today I’m going to demonstrate how to assist a patient to safely ambulate. I have Chris here who is going to assist with this demonstration.

We've just assisted Chris to move from a sitting down to standing up position, we've assessed his standing balance, and marching on the spot, and Chris is ready to walk.

In order to prepare yourself to walk the patient, ensure you are standing on their side preferably the weaker or affected side. Place one hand on or over the patient's chest and the other near their lower back.

Chris was a little bit unsteady when we assessed his marching on the spot so, I’ve opted to provide him a little bit of assistance. I’m going to use my outer hand and place it with Chris’s hand and my other hand on his lower back.

Chris are you ready to walk? — I am.

Okay, let's go.

While I’m walking the patient, I’m constantly assessing him for signs of clinical deterioration and exercise tolerance. Things I’m looking for are shortness of breath, grimacing, and any changes in the colour of his face. You can also ask the patient questions such as, Chris are you feeling any dizziness? Any light-headedness?

Chris is ready to proceed with ambulation. If the patient did have any of these signs of clinical deterioration, then you can ask the patient whether they need a standing or seated rests or cease mobilization. We're going to continue walking, Chris.

Okay, so we're going to start turning around. When you turn around, ensure to take a wide arc rather than turning on the spot. This could cause patients to imbalance and fall if they turn on the spot. Okay, we're going to head for the chair, Chris, start turning around good and walking backwards slowly until your legs touch the chair. Now we're going to reach one hand back for the arm rest at a time, and slowly lower yourself down.

Well done, Chris, — thank you.

Now once you've finished ambulating the patient, it is important to reassess those clinical signs of deterioration. Chris how are you feeling? Any dizziness? Light-headedness? Shortness of breath? Pain? Those are type of questions you could possibly ask your patient.

Now upon leaving the patient place the call bell within their reach and advise them to contact the nurse if they require any assistance. Also ensure that any of the patient's personal belongings are within their reach and educate the patient that if you need to go walking, you must have someone with you to ensure you are safe.

Okay, great, and that's safe ambulation.