

# Savannah Barkley

## Spinal cord thinking exercise

The nurse is developing a plan of care for a 17-year-old who was admitted to the hospital following a complete severing of the spinal cord at T10 resulting in paraplegia and necessitating mechanical ventilation for 24 hours; the patient is now off the ventilator and breathing on his own. He was admitted to the neurosurgical unit after open reduction and internal fixation (ORIF) to stabilize his spine.

Use an X to indicate whether the nursing actions below are **Anticipated** (appropriate or likely Necessary), **Contraindicated** (could be harmful), or **Non-Essential** (make no difference or are not necessary) for the patient's postoperative care at this time.

Nursing Action	Anticipated	Contraindicated	Non-Essential
Monitor vital signs per facility standards	✓		
Encourage coughing and deep breathing exercises	✓		
Administer analgesic as prescribed	✓		
Reposition the patient every 4 hours		✓	
Apply sequential compression devices	✓		
Keep NPO until the patient voids and reports no nausea		✓	
Obtain an order for echocardiogram			✓
Consult clergy or social worker for family support	✓		
Collaborate with respiratory therapy to maintain oxygenation as needed	✓		
Complete a dietary assessment			✓
Obtain an order for an indwelling urinary catheter		✓	
Monitor the patient's level of sensory perception every 4 hours	✓		
Collaborate with physical therapy to promote independence	✓		

Rationales: Please document your rationales here.

- Vital signs are important to monitor for overall health
- Coughing etc promotes movement of fluid in lungs
- Pain meds if pts needs them
- Repositioning would be contraindicated due to spinal injury
- SCD to prevent clots - Pt needs to eat for nutrition

- an echo is non essential, pt is breathing on his own
- family will need support for new injury
- will want to maintain good O<sub>2</sub> for adequate perfusion in body
- as long as pt can swallow pt can eat what he wants
- to help and promote independence, training of bowel/bladder ~~would~~ would help pt in the long run
- Monitor sensory perception, want to make sure injury isn't getting worse
- Promoting independence for the 17ylo helps his physically and emotionally.