

FUNCTIONALLY DEPENDENT PATIENTS

Every individual values the ability to live independently. Functional activities encompass all those tasks, activities & roles that identify a person as independent. These activities require both cognitive & sensory motor skills.

However due to some diseases or age related factor some people are not able to carry much of their daily tasks independently & hence needs assistance. Such patients may have limitation of activity & participation.

Patients who are not able to perform 50 % or more that their task is considered to be functional dependent. Although level of dependent is a subjective term, assessing their functional level helps to identify the rehabilitation needs of an individual.

Age also has a contributing factor. Children below 12 years & adults above 65 years are considered to be functionally dependent since in former, the loco motor skills are not fully developed & in the latter group these skills may get diminished due to old age.

Following points can be considered:

- Patients who are dependent for their daily functions are also more prone to falls
- Such patients need to be trained to gradually reduce their dependence based on their primary condition.
- Hence modification of the space & activities should be considered for them.
- While ambulating in wheelchair, ensure that the belts are well fastened as there is a tendency to slip from the chair.
- Use anti slip mats in the area of their activity. Keep bathrooms dry to reduce the risk of fall.
- Ensure that the patient's area is kept free of any obstacles.
- Adequate lighting should be provided at all times in the patient room
- Railings & ramps are recommended at the entrance of the building or villas.
- Wearing supportive footwear helps gain good balance during ambulation.
- Ensure that essential items for the patient like water ,medicine are kept in easy reach of the patient
- Encourage patients to use their body muscles to maximal level possible to reduce their dependence on others
- Use of signage board should be provided where ever applicable.
- It is advisable to consult physiotherapist to improve the functional status after recommendation by the treating doctor.