

Lying As A Resting & Working Position

Your physiotherapist may have recommended that your student lie down as an alternate position both for resting and/or for working. A "side-lyer" can be used in different ways such as:

- flat on the floor
- on the floor with a wedge under it so that your student's head is elevated
- flat on a high surface to bring your student to a level with the other students at their desks for group work and to make it easier for transfers
- wedged on a high surface

(Note: with both of the last two suggestions, you will need to make sure that your student has an adequate size working surface in front of him/her and the side-lyer is secured so that it will not slide off of the high surface.)

Safety is of prime concern when moving the individual up to a higher surface.

Side-lying can sometimes be a good preparation for other activities as it may help your student to relax more in the trunk and limbs. This position may also be an option for classroom activities. **Your physiotherapist should be able to help you work out the specifics for your student.** Side-lying may give your student a change from sitting, eliminate the stress of gravity, and allow your student to stretch out. However, it is important to consider if this is a position where s/he may shut down or go to sleep.



This student is lying on a stretcher while having her feed as well as using her switch to play music for peers.



Here our student is lying down while using a micro-switch to shred some paper as one of her jobs.

Side-lying or back-lying, may be positions where your student has an opportunity to work with minimal physical demands. The following are some considerations:

- lie your student on his/her side with their back against a firm surface
- there should be a small firm pillow under the head that keeps the neck in line with the rest of the spine
- position any activities to encourage your student's chin tuck position
- arms should be reaching forward from the shoulders
- when lying on the side, bend up the bottom leg and support the top leg with a pillow to keep it horizontal