

Patients Requiring Mechanical Ventilation – Principles of Occupational Therapy Intervention and Case Study

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Patients who require mechanical ventilation present a challenge for therapists since their medical condition is usually quite complicated. The main treatment goal is to wean the patient from mechanical ventilation and release him/her from ventilator dependency. To accomplish this objective, a multidisciplinary treatment approach is needed in which the emphasis is on the rehabilitation of the respiratory and skeletal muscles, early mobilization and emotional support. The purpose of this article is to present the characteristics of patients requiring mechanical ventilation, the principles of their treatment and the occupational therapy intervention given in the respiratory rehabilitation unit of Beit Rivka Geriatric Medical Center in Petach-Tikva. The occupational therapists focus on increasing functional endurance and improving ADL functions, teaching strategies for energy conservation, proper breathing during activity performance and the use of assistive devices. In addition, occupational therapists assist in providing alternative methods of

communication, preventing soft tissueinjuries and maintaining proper head, trunk and upper limb positioning during lying and sitting. The intervention is adapted to suit each patient and blood oxygen saturation, pulse and breathing rate are monitored during each treatment session. The occupational therapy intervention provided in the respiratory rehabilitation unit in Beit Rivka is consistent with the current literature and reflects evidence-based practice in occupational therapy.