

Team Integration & Outcome Optimization Through Mirror Therapy

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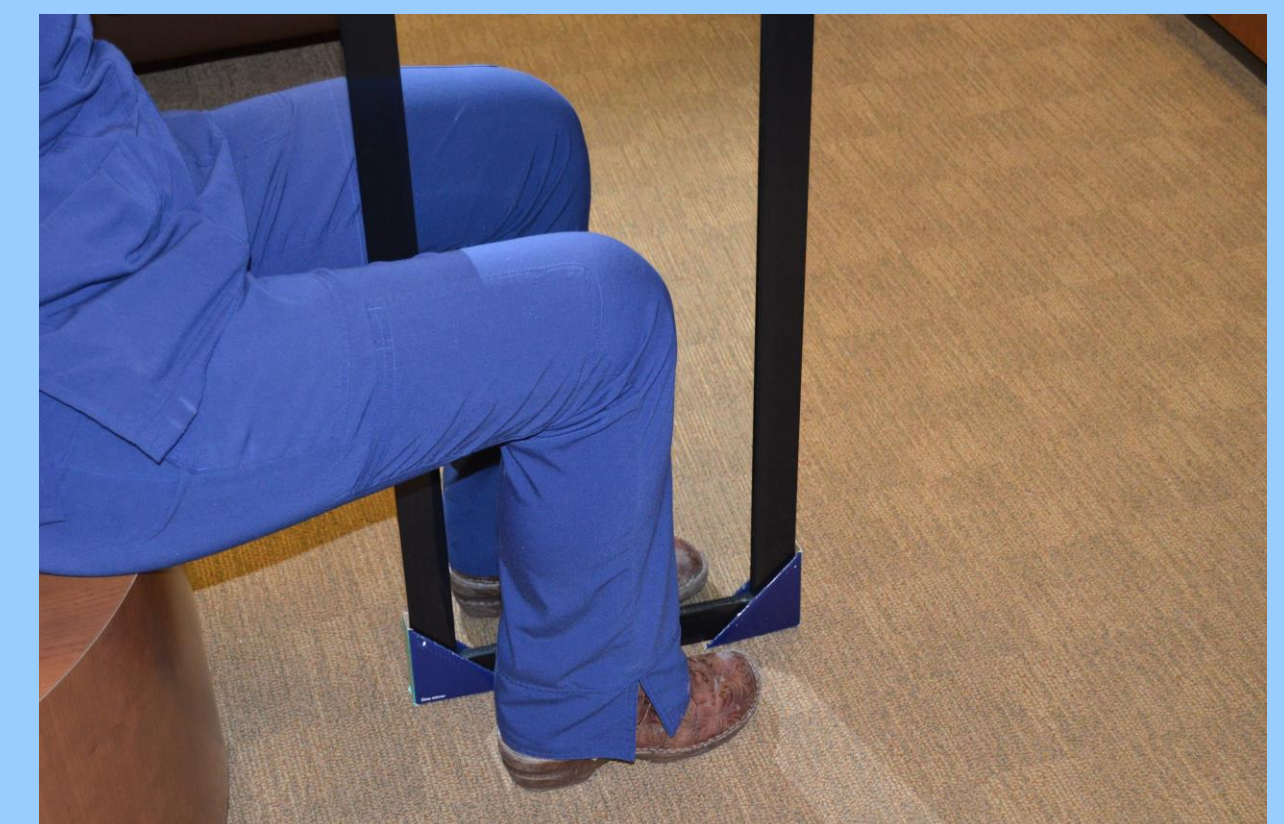
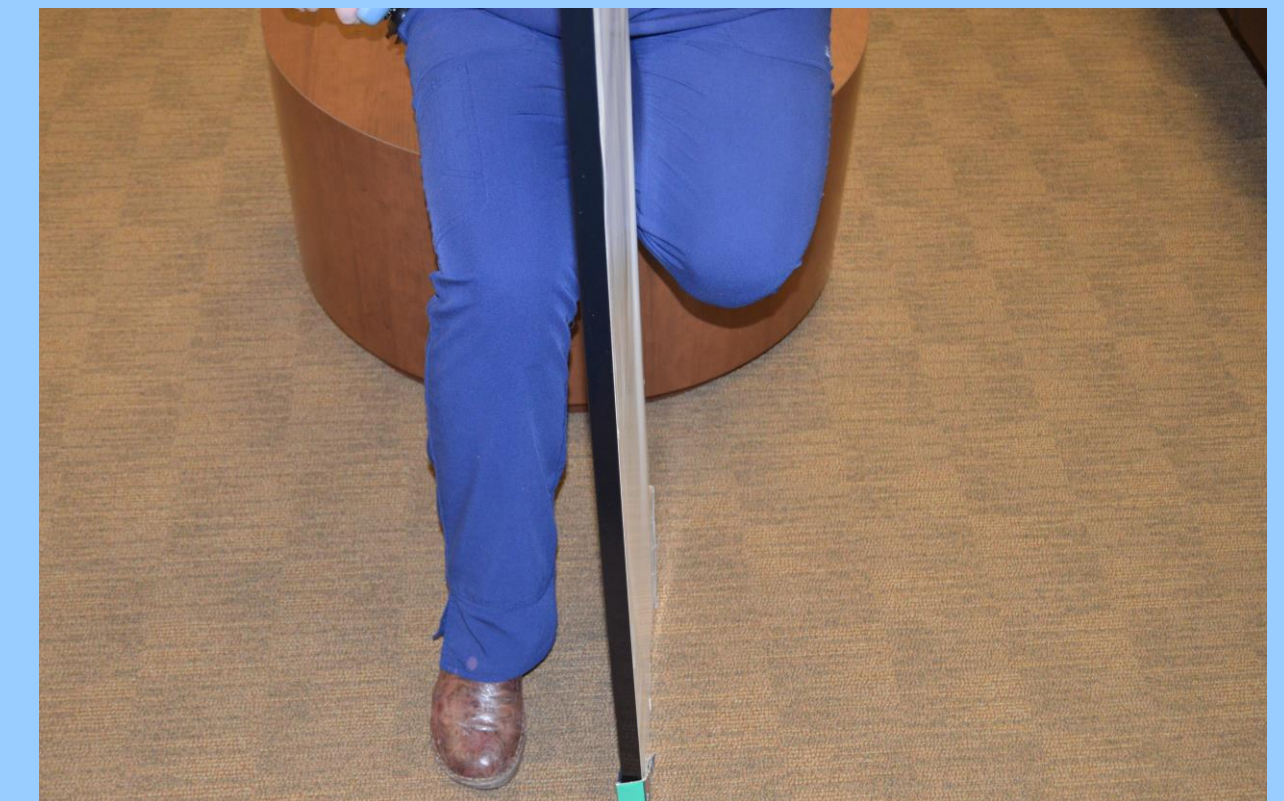
INTRODUCTION

Since its discovery, mirror therapy has proven useful in treating a wide variety of conditions including but not limited to amputation-related phantom limb pain syndrome, stroke-induced hemiparesis, stroke-induced hemi-neglect, complex regional pain syndrome, and brachial plexus avulsion-related phantom limb pain. Through the use of a simple store bought mirror or commercially available "mirror box," mirror therapy can be easily taught to most patients in a single therapy session and then performed independently by patients in their room when not in a formal therapy session.



STEPS FOR MIRROR THERAPY PROGRAM

- Therapist will develop and initiate the treatment program
- RNs will continue treatment program outside of therapy hours
- Assess patient for possibility of emotional distress related to grief before and after each session. Allow patient time to verbalize and discuss feelings of loss or grief
- Instruct patient to close eyes during set up of mirror
- Position affected and unaffected limb in position of preference before patient visualizes mirror image
- Instruct patient to mimic movements with affected side
- Instruct patient to begin with basic/gross motor movements and advance to more complex/task-specific movements
- Encourage patient to build up to 100 repetitions for each movement
- Assess patient's pain level before and after each session. Document appropriately in medical record. Encourage patient to also keep a journal.
- For optimal results, treatment plan should last at least 4 weeks. Each session should last at least 15 minutes. Patient should be instructed to continue treatment plan at home as part of his/her home exercise program.



CONCLUSION

This program has proven successful from multiple standpoints. First and foremost, it has improved patient outcomes because it affords patients more therapy time beyond the traditional offering of three hours per day. It has also improved patient satisfaction because it gives patients a sense of empowerment and independence. Additionally, it has improved integration between nursing and therapy staff by offering an additional opportunity for collaboration between these two important disciplines. We highly recommend this program to any unit seeking to improve patient outcomes and promote team integration.