Carotid Artery Scans

Know Your Risks

Carotid artery scans can result in long forward reaches and awkward, unsupported shoulder postures if performed by reaching across the patient. This places considerable static loading on shoulder muscles, which increases risk of fatigue and injury.

Consider Your Options

1. One option is to have the patient lie angled on the bed so their left side is closer to you. This reduces shoulder abduction and reaching. Resting the weight of your arm on the patient or using a rolled up towel or cushion further reduces static loading.

2. Another option is to perform the carotid scan from the head of the bed. Slide the chair under the bed to get close to the patient. Bring the keyboard and monitor close, support your arm on the chair with a padded arm support. The cable brace worn on the arm can reduce the torque to the wrist caused by the cable pulling.

3. Scan from behind with the patient upright in a chair. The shoulder is supported with a padded support on the wing of the chair and the trunk posture is upright.