

WHICH EXAMINATION POSITION HAS THE PATIENT IN A SUPINE POSITION WITH THE FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS?

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WHEN IT COMES TO MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS, PARTICULARLY GYNECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENTS, UNDERSTANDING THE VARIOUS PATIENT POSITIONING TECHNIQUES IS ESSENTIAL FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS. ONE SPECIFIC POSITION INVOLVES THE PATIENT LYING ON THEIR BACK (SUPINE POSITION) WITH THEIR FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS. THIS POSITIONING FACILITATES COMPREHENSIVE PELVIC EXAMINATIONS, INCLUDING PAP SMEARS, PELVIC ULTRASOUNDS, AND OTHER GYNECOLOGICAL PROCEDURES. IN THIS ARTICLE, WE WILL EXPLORE IN DETAIL WHICH EXAMINATION POSITION THIS DESCRIBES, ITS PURPOSE, THE CORRECT WAY TO POSITION A PATIENT, AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS POSITION IN MEDICAL PRACTICE.

UNDERSTANDING THE SUPINE POSITION WITH LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS

DEFINITION OF THE POSITION

THE EXAMINATION POSITION CHARACTERIZED BY THE PATIENT LYING ON THEIR BACK WITH FEET AND LEGS ELEVATED AND SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS IS COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION. THIS POSITION IS A STANDARD IN GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMS, OBSTETRIC ASSESSMENTS, AND CERTAIN UROLOGICAL PROCEDURES.

WHAT ARE STIRRUPS?

STIRRUPS ARE ADJUSTABLE METAL OR PLASTIC SUPPORTS ATTACHED TO THE EXAMINATION TABLE. THEY ARE DESIGNED TO HOLD THE PATIENT'S LEGS IN AN ELEVATED AND ABDUCTED POSITION, ALLOWING OPTIMAL ACCESS TO THE PELVIC AREA. THE STIRRUPS HELP IN:

- PROVIDING STABILITY AND SUPPORT FOR THE PATIENT
- ALLOWING THE HEALTHCARE PROVIDER TO PERFORM THOROUGH EXAMINATIONS
- FACILITATING PROCEDURES THAT REQUIRE ACCESS TO THE VULVA, VAGINA, AND CERVIX

THE LITHOTOMY POSITION: AN IN-DEPTH LOOK

DEFINITION AND OVERVIEW

THE LITHOTOMY POSITION INVOLVES THE PATIENT LYING SUPINE WITH HIPS FLEXED AND THIGHS ABDUCTED AND EXTERNALLY ROTATED, SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS. THIS POSITION IS THE MOST COMMONLY USED FOR GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS AND PROCEDURES.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

THE LITHOTOMY POSITION HAS BEEN USED FOR CENTURIES, WITH ORIGINS TRACING BACK TO ANCIENT MEDICAL PRACTICES. OVER TIME, IT HAS EVOLVED INTO THE STANDARDIZED POSITION USED WORLDWIDE FOR SPECIFIC EXAMINATIONS, OWING TO ITS PRACTICALITY AND ACCESSIBILITY.

WHY IS THIS POSITION USED?

THIS POSITION OFFERS SEVERAL ADVANTAGES:

- PROVIDES DIRECT ACCESS TO THE PELVIC ORGANS
- ALLOWS FOR BETTER VISUALIZATION OF THE VULVA, VAGINA, AND CERVIX
- FACILITATES INSTRUMENTATION, SUCH AS SPECULUM EXAMINATIONS
- ENSURES PATIENT STABILITY AND COMFORT DURING PROCEDURES

HOW TO PROPERLY POSITION A PATIENT IN THE LITHOTOMY POSITION

PREPARATION STEPS

BEFORE POSITIONING, ENSURE:

- THE EXAMINATION TABLE AND STIRRUPS ARE CLEAN AND FUNCTIONING PROPERLY
- THE PATIENT IS INFORMED ABOUT THE PROCEDURE AND POSITION
- PRIVACY AND DRAPING ARE MAINTAINED FOR COMFORT AND DIGNITY

STEP-BY-STEP POSITIONING GUIDE

1. ASSIST THE PATIENT TO LIE SUPINE: HAVE THE PATIENT LIE FLAT ON THEIR BACK ON THE EXAMINATION TABLE.
2. ALIGN THE PATIENT'S BODY: ENSURE THE HIPS ARE ALIGNED WITH THE EDGE OF THE TABLE FOR STABILITY.
3. ADJUST THE STIRRUPS: POSITION THE STIRRUPS AT AN APPROPRIATE HEIGHT AND ANGLE.
4. SUPPORT THE LEGS: GENTLY LIFT EACH LEG AND PLACE THE PATIENT'S FEET IN THE STIRRUPS, ENSURING THE THIGHS ARE FLEXED AT APPROXIMATELY 90 DEGREES AT THE HIPS AND KNEES.
5. POSITION THE THIGHS: ABDUCT AND SLIGHTLY EXTERNALLY ROTATE THE THIGHS TO OPEN THE VULVAR AREA.
6. ENSURE COMFORT AND SAFETY: CONFIRM THAT THE PATIENT IS COMFORTABLE, WITH NO UNDUE PRESSURE ON THE LEGS OR HIPS, AND THAT THE STIRRUPS ARE SECURE.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROPER POSITIONING

- PATIENT COMFORT: USE PADDING IF NECESSARY TO PREVENT PRESSURE SORES.
- POSITION STABILITY: ENSURE STIRRUPS ARE LOCKED AND SECURE.
- MAINTAINING DIGNITY: USE DRAPES AND PROPER EXPOSURE TECHNIQUES TO MAINTAIN PATIENT PRIVACY.

- MONITORING: OBSERVE FOR SIGNS OF DISCOMFORT OR CIRCULATORY ISSUES DURING THE PROCEDURE.

APPLICATIONS OF THE LITHOTOMY POSITION IN MEDICAL PRACTICE

GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS

THE LITHOTOMY POSITION IS STANDARD FOR:

- PAP SMEAR COLLECTION
- PELVIC EXAMINATIONS
- COLPOSCOPY
- VAGINAL AND CERVICAL ASSESSMENTS

OBSTETRIC PROCEDURES

DURING LABOR AND DELIVERY, THIS POSITION IS OFTEN USED FOR:

- VAGINAL EXAMINATIONS
- CESAREAN SECTIONS
- DELIVERY ASSISTANCE

UROLOGICAL PROCEDURES

CERTAIN UROLOGICAL EXAMS AND SURGERIES, SUCH AS CYSTOSCOPY, ALSO UTILIZE THIS POSITION TO ACCESS THE BLADDER AND URETHRA.

OTHER MEDICAL INTERVENTIONS

THIS POSITION FACILITATES PROCEDURES SUCH AS:

- VAGINAL SURGERY
- INTRAUTERINE DEVICE (IUD) INSERTION
- ENDOMETRIAL BIOPSIES

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE LITHOTOMY POSITION

ADVANTAGES

- PROVIDES OPTIMAL VISUALIZATION AND ACCESS TO PELVIC ORGANS
- FACILITATES THOROUGH EXAMINATIONS AND PROCEDURES

- ENHANCES PATIENT STABILITY DURING INVASIVE PROCEDURES
- WIDELY ACCEPTED AND STANDARDIZED IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

DISADVANTAGES

- MAY CAUSE DISCOMFORT OR ANXIETY
- PROLONGED USE CAN LEAD TO CIRCULATORY OR NERVE COMPRESSION ISSUES
- NOT SUITABLE FOR ALL PATIENTS, SUCH AS THOSE WITH CERTAIN ORTHOPEDIC OR NEUROLOGICAL CONDITIONS
- RISK OF PRESSURE SORES IF NOT MANAGED PROPERLY

CONCLUSION: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LITHOTOMY POSITION IN MEDICAL PRACTICE

THE EXAMINATION POSITION THAT PLACES THE PATIENT IN A SUPINE POSITION WITH FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS IS UNIVERSALLY RECOGNIZED AS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION. IT IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT OF GYNECOLOGICAL, OBSTETRIC, AND UROLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS, OFFERING HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS OPTIMAL ACCESS TO THE PELVIC REGION. PROPER TECHNIQUE, PATIENT COMFORT, AND SAFETY ARE PARAMOUNT TO ENSURE EFFECTIVE AND RESPECTFUL CARE.

IN SUMMARY, UNDERSTANDING THE CORRECT POSITIONING, ITS APPLICATIONS, AND ASSOCIATED CONSIDERATIONS ENHANCES THE QUALITY OF PATIENT CARE AND ENSURES PROCEDURAL SUCCESS. WHETHER USED DURING ROUTINE EXAMINATIONS OR COMPLEX PROCEDURES, THE LITHOTOMY POSITION REMAINS A CORNERSTONE IN REPRODUCTIVE AND PELVIC HEALTH ASSESSMENTS.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

- THE POSITION INVOLVES THE PATIENT LYING ON THEIR BACK WITH HIPS FLEXED AND THIGHS ABDUCTED, SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS.
- COMMONLY CALLED THE LITHOTOMY POSITION.
- ESSENTIAL FOR GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMS, OBSTETRIC PROCEDURES, AND CERTAIN UROLOGICAL SURGERIES.
- PROPER POSITIONING PROMOTES SAFETY, COMFORT, AND OPTIMAL EXAMINATION CONDITIONS.

META DESCRIPTION:

LEARN ABOUT THE EXAMINATION POSITION WHERE THE PATIENT IS IN A SUPINE POSITION WITH FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS—COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION—AND ITS IMPORTANCE IN GYNECOLOGICAL AND PELVIC EXAMINATIONS.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE EXAMINATION POSITION WHERE THE PATIENT LIES ON THEIR BACK WITH FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS?

THIS POSITION IS CALLED THE LITHOTOMY POSITION.

IN WHICH GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMINATION IS THE PATIENT PLACED IN A SUPINE POSITION WITH LEGS ELEVATED IN STIRRUPS?

THIS IS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION, COMMONLY USED FOR PELVIC AND GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMS.

WHY IS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION USED DURING PELVIC EXAMINATIONS?

IT PROVIDES OPTIMAL ACCESS TO THE PELVIC ORGANS AND ALLOWS FOR THOROUGH EXAMINATION AND PROCEDURES.

WHAT ARE THE KEY FEATURES OF THE LITHOTOMY POSITION?

THE PATIENT LIES ON THE BACK WITH HIPS FLEXED, THIGHS ABDUCTED, AND FEET SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE LITHOTOMY POSITION DURING EXAMINATIONS?

POTENTIAL RISKS INCLUDE NERVE COMPRESSION, BLOOD FLOW RESTRICTION, AND DISCOMFORT, WHICH SHOULD BE MINIMIZED BY PROPER POSITIONING.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

WHICH EXAMINATION POSITION HAS THE PATIENT IN A SUPINE POSITION WITH THE FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS?

IN THE REALM OF CLINICAL EXAMINATIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO GYNECOLOGICAL, OBSTETRIC, AND CERTAIN PELVIC ASSESSMENTS, THE PATIENT'S POSITIONING IS CRUCIAL FOR BOTH DIAGNOSTIC ACCURACY AND PROCEDURAL COMFORT. AMONG THE MYRIAD OF POSITIONS UTILIZED IN MEDICAL PRACTICE, ONE SPECIFIC POSITION INVOLVES THE PATIENT LYING IN A SUPINE POSTURE WITH THEIR FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS. THIS POSITION IS FUNDAMENTAL IN FACILITATING ACCESS TO THE PELVIC REGION WHILE MAINTAINING PATIENT STABILITY AND COMFORT. THIS COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW AIMS TO EXPLORE THE INTRICACIES OF THIS EXAMINATION POSITION, ITS CLINICAL APPLICATIONS, VARIATIONS, AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SUPINE POSITION WITH STIRRUPS

THE POSITION WHERE THE PATIENT IS PLACED SUPINE WITH LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS IS WIDELY RECOGNIZED IN GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS, CHILDBIRTH, AND CERTAIN UROLOGICAL PROCEDURES. ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE UNOBSTRUCTED ACCESS TO THE PELVIC ORGANS—UTERUS, OVARIES, BLADDER, AND RECTUM—WHILE ENSURING PATIENT SAFETY AND COMFORT.

THIS POSITION IS OFTEN CONSIDERED A STANDARD OR DEFAULT POSTURE FOR MANY PELVIC EXAMINATIONS, FACILITATING BOTH VISUAL INSPECTION AND MANUAL PALPATION, AS WELL AS ENABLING THE USE OF INSTRUMENTS SUCH AS SPECULUMS AND ULTRASOUND PROBES.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND NOMENCLATURE

HISTORICALLY, THE USE OF STIRRUPS DATES BACK CENTURIES, WITH VARIATIONS IN POSITIONING EVOLVING ALONGSIDE

ADVANCEMENTS IN MEDICAL UNDERSTANDING AND TECHNOLOGY. THE TERMINOLOGY ASSOCIATED WITH THIS POSITION TENDS TO VARY DEPENDING ON THE SPECIFIC APPLICATION:

- LITHOTOMY POSITION: THE MOST COMMON TERM FOR THIS POSITION, ESPECIALLY IN GYNECOLOGY, OBSTETRICS, AND UROLOGY.
- SUPINE WITH LEGS ELEVATED: A DESCRIPTIVE PHRASE EMPHASIZING THE PATIENT'S POSTURE.
- DORSAL LITHOTOMY: A SPECIFIC VARIATION USED PREDOMINANTLY IN SURGICAL PROCEDURES.

WHILE "LITHOTOMY" IS OFTEN USED INTERCHANGEABLY WITH "SUPINE WITH STIRRUPS," IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE SUBTLE DISTINCTIONS, AS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION INVOLVES SPECIFIC LEG ELEVATION AND FLEXION ANGLES.

DEFINING FEATURES OF THE LITHOTOMY POSITION

THE LITHOTOMY POSITION INVOLVES THE PATIENT LYING ON THEIR BACK (SUPINE), WITH HIPS FLEXED AND THIGHS ABDUCTED, SUPPORTED BY STIRRUPS. KEY FEATURES INCLUDE:

- PATIENT LYING FLAT ON THE EXAMINATION TABLE.
- LEGS ELEVATED AND FLEXED AT THE HIPS, OFTEN WITH KNEES BENT AT APPROXIMATELY 90 DEGREES.
- FEET PLACED IN STIRRUPS THAT SUPPORT THE ANKLES AND CALVES.
- PELVIC AREA EXPOSED FOR EXAMINATION OR PROCEDURE.

THIS POSITIONING NOT ONLY PROVIDES OPTIMAL ACCESS TO THE VAGINAL AND CERVICAL REGIONS BUT ALSO ALLOWS FOR BETTER VISUALIZATION AND INSTRUMENTATION.

TYPES OF STIRRUPS AND THEIR VARIATIONS

STIRRUPS COME IN VARIOUS DESIGNS, TAILORED TO SPECIFIC CLINICAL NEEDS:

- STANDARD STIRRUP: SIMPLE METAL SUPPORTS ATTACHED TO THE EXAMINATION TABLE, ADJUSTABLE TO ACCOMMODATE DIFFERENT PATIENT SIZES.
- DORSAL LITHOTOMY STIRRUPS: DESIGNED TO HOLD LEGS IN A FLEXED AND ABDUCTED POSITION.
- SIMS' STIRRUPS: SUPPORT THE LEGS IN A SEMI-FLEXED, ABDUCTED POSITION, SOMETIMES USED FOR RECTAL EXAMINATIONS.
- GYNAECOLOGICAL STIRRUPS: SPECIALIZED FOR GYNECOLOGICAL PROCEDURES WITH ADJUSTABLE HEIGHT AND ANGLE FEATURES.

THE CHOICE OF STIRRUP TYPE INFLUENCES PATIENT COMFORT, EASE OF ACCESS, AND PROCEDURAL SUCCESS.

CLINICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE SUPINE WITH STIRRUPS POSITION

THIS POSITION IS EMPLOYED ACROSS VARIOUS MEDICAL CONTEXTS:

GYNECOLOGICAL EXAMINATIONS

- VISUAL INSPECTION OF THE VULVA, VAGINA, AND CERVIX.
- PAP SMEAR COLLECTION.
- VAGINAL AND CERVICAL BIOPSIES.

- ULTRASOUND-GUIDED PROCEDURES.

OBSTETRIC PROCEDURES

- DELIVERY (ESPECIALLY DURING THE SECOND STAGE OF LABOR).
- VULVAR OR VAGINAL ASSESSMENTS DURING LABOR.

UROLOGICAL AND UROGYNECOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

- CYSTOSCOPY.
- URODYNAMIC STUDIES.

SURGICAL INTERVENTIONS

- PELVIC SURGERIES SUCH AS HYSTERECTOMY.
- REMOVAL OF OVARIAN OR UTERINE MASSES.

ADVANTAGES OF THE LITHOTOMY POSITION IN EXAMINATION AND PROCEDURES

THIS POSITION OFFERS SEVERAL BENEFITS:

- ENHANCED VISUAL ACCESS: THE VULVAR AND VAGINAL AREAS ARE EASILY VISUALIZED.
- FACILITATION OF INSTRUMENTATION: USE OF SPECULUMS, ULTRASOUND PROBES, AND SURGICAL TOOLS IS SIMPLIFIED.
- PATIENT STABILITY: STIRRUPS SECURE THE LEGS, PREVENTING MOVEMENT DURING PROCEDURES.
- OPTIMAL ORGAN ALIGNMENT: ASSISTS IN ALIGNING PELVIC ORGANS FOR ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION.

CONSIDERATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

WHILE WIDELY USED, THIS POSITION HAS ASSOCIATED CONSIDERATIONS:

PATIENT COMFORT AND SAFETY

- PROLONGED DURATION MAY CAUSE DISCOMFORT OR NERVE INJURY.
- PROPER PADDING AND POSITIONING ARE ESSENTIAL TO PREVENT PRESSURE SORES AND NERVE COMPRESSION.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

- PATIENTS WITH CERTAIN MUSCULOSKELETAL, NEUROLOGICAL, OR VASCULAR CONDITIONS MAY NOT TOLERATE THIS POSITION.
- OBESE PATIENTS OR THOSE WITH MOBILITY IMPAIRMENTS MAY REQUIRE MODIFIED POSITIONING.

POTENTIAL FOR COMPLICATIONS

- NERVE INJURIES (E.G., PERONEAL NERVE COMPRESSION).
- CIRCULATORY COMPROMISE IF STIRRUPS ARE IMPROPERLY ADJUSTED.
- DISCOMFORT OR ANXIETY LEADING TO PATIENT NON-COOPERATION.

VARIATIONS AND ALTERNATIVES TO THE TRADITIONAL LITHOTOMY POSITION

DEPENDING ON CLINICAL NEEDS AND PATIENT FACTORS, ALTERNATIVE POSITIONS MAY BE EMPLOYED:

- MODIFIED LITHOTOMY: ADJUSTED LEG ELEVATION AND FLEXION TO ENHANCE COMFORT.
- LATERAL DECUBITUS: FOR PATIENTS UNABLE TO TOLERATE SUPINE POSITIONS.
- KNEE-CHEST POSITION: USED IN CERTAIN EXAMINATIONS WHERE ACCESS TO THE POSTERIOR PELVIC AREA IS NEEDED.
- STANDING OR SITTING POSITIONS: LESS COMMON BUT USED IN SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT CONTEXTS.

PROCEDURE: HOW TO PROPERLY POSITION A PATIENT IN THE SUPINE WITH STIRRUPS

ACHIEVING THE CORRECT POSITION INVOLVES SEVERAL STEPS:

1. PREPARATION

- ENSURE PRIVACY AND EXPLAIN THE PROCEDURE TO THE PATIENT.
- GATHER NECESSARY EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING ADJUSTABLE STIRRUPS, PADDING, AND EXAMINATION TOOLS.

2. PATIENT POSITIONING

- ASSIST THE PATIENT ONTO THE EXAMINATION TABLE, LYING ON THEIR BACK.
- HELP THE PATIENT FLEX THE HIPS AND KNEES AS NEEDED.
- GENTLY ELEVATE THE LEGS INTO THE STIRRUPS, ENSURING PROPER ALIGNMENT.

3. ADJUSTMENTS

- SECURE THE LEGS IN STIRRUPS AT APPROPRIATE HEIGHT AND ANGLE.
- CHECK FOR PRESSURE POINTS AND PAD ANY AREAS PRONE TO DISCOMFORT.
- CONFIRM PATIENT STABILITY AND COMFORT.

4. FINAL CHECKS

- ENSURE THE PATIENT'S ARMS ARE COMFORTABLY POSITIONED.
- MAINTAIN PRIVACY WITH DRAPING.
- COMMUNICATE WITH THE PATIENT THROUGHOUT TO MONITOR COMFORT.

CONCLUSION

THE EXAMINATION POSITION CHARACTERIZED BY THE PATIENT LYING IN A SUPINE POSTURE WITH THE FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS, COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION, REMAINS A CORNERSTONE IN GYNECOLOGICAL, OBSTETRIC, AND UROLOGICAL PRACTICE. ITS DESIGN FACILITATES COMPREHENSIVE PELVIC ASSESSMENT, ENABLING CLINICIANS TO PERFORM

EXAMINATIONS AND PROCEDURES WITH PRECISION AND EFFICIENCY.

WHILE ITS ADVANTAGES ARE WELL-RECOGNIZED, ATTENTION TO PATIENT COMFORT, SAFETY, AND INDIVIDUALIZED ADJUSTMENTS IS PARAMOUNT. AS MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY EVOLVES AND PATIENT-CENTERED CARE TAKES PRECEDENCE, UNDERSTANDING THE NUANCES OF THIS POSITION ALLOWS HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS TO OPTIMIZE OUTCOMES AND ENHANCE PATIENT EXPERIENCES.

IN SUMMARY, THE EXAMINATION POSITION THAT INVOLVES THE PATIENT IN A SUPINE POSITION WITH THE FEET AND LEGS SUPPORTED IN STIRRUPS IS BEST IDENTIFIED AS THE LITHOTOMY POSITION, A VITAL COMPONENT OF MODERN CLINICAL PRACTICE THAT CONTINUES TO SERVE AS A FUNDAMENTAL TOOL IN PELVIC HEALTH ASSESSMENTS.

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Which Examination Position Has The Patient In A Supine Position With The Feet And Legs Supported In Stirrups

Which Examination Position Has The Patient In A Supine Position With The Feet And Legs Supported In Stirrups

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