

PPRS staff may assist with bathing after successfully completing this training on bathing. Please consult service plan regarding specific assistance with bathing.

Bathing

Bathing is one way of making the residents look good, feel good and smell nice as dirt and harmful microorganisms are removed from the body. Giving a bath to residents should always be scheduled and planned, so that residents know when it is due and take active part in it. Bathing improves the blood circulation as it relaxes the muscles and tissues. It is also a good way for nursing assistants to observe and assess the resident as to know their health and well-being. This assessment provides vital information that may be needed in the improvement of care and treatment of diseases.

Proper hygiene and grooming activities cannot be accomplished successfully without the participation of the residents themselves. As the healthcare team, we want to have the residents to take care of their own hygiene themselves whenever possible.

Letting them decide how they want to take care of themselves without breaking the protocol of the facility is one way for them to exercise their right for autonomy.

Safety & Privacy During Bathing

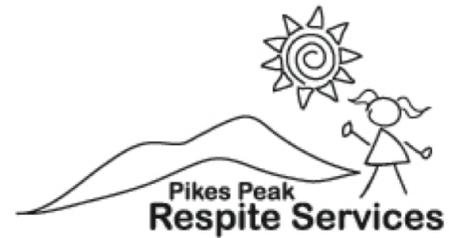
Bathing is known to be the time when many accidents take place. It imposes especially higher risk for older residents who are prone to falls anyway. It is therefore important for the healthcare team and especially nurses and CNAs to protect the residents from these accidents by maintaining safety of the environment.

It is important to take every precaution to avoid falls due to slippery tubs, wet floor or even sponges left on the floor by mistake. Assistive devices such as rails, walkers and others should be used in order to secure them and finish giving care without any injuries or accidents.

Of course, knowing the policy regarding the use of such devices should be strictly followed.

Improper use of these devices may only result in accidents and may be considered a hindrance or a restraint to the residents.

While keeping the residents safe, we must also give them privacy. That is why it is important to use devices such as curtains/separators not only during bathing procedures, but in any care that involves privacy. Such things may include exposing resident's private parts to other people.



Observing Skin Condition During Bathing

Being observant to client's skin condition can prevent possible infections and skin breaks. As we all know even a simple scratch may become an entrance wound for harmful germs.

The fact that these disease causing germs or microorganisms may thrive in warm and wet areas shows us that wet armpits, buttocks and any other parts of the body that has folds and creases must be properly dried with a towel.

Simple signs of pain, redness, swelling and even small blisters should be noted and reported to licensed nurses as early as possible.

Keep in mind however, that it is the responsibility of the licensed nurse not you to apply the remedies, medications or any kind of products to be applied that are prescribed by the doctors.

Pressure Ulcers And Bed Sores

Pressure ulcers also known as decubitus ulcer or bed sores, are sores that are caused by constant or lengthened pressure in body parts that blocks the blood circulation and cause a skin break and then a bed sore. It can be found in different parts of the body especially those parts which are bony such as the hip, the elbow, shoulder, spine, the buttocks and even the side of the head.

Bed sores can sometimes be misleading since they may be acquired outside the bed such as prolonged sitting. Elderly residents, especially the ones with disabilities, are of higher risks of having pressure ulcers.

Pressure ulcers cause residents complications and sorrow because they are very painful and do not heal easily. If not treated properly, they tend to worsen and get bigger. That is why it is important for the health care team and CNAs to follow the facility's protocol regarding giving care and treatment to those residents who are already experiencing bedsores.

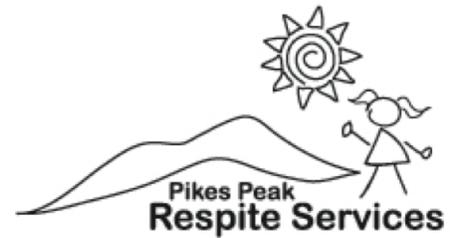
Of course the best approach to pressure ulcers is to prevent residents from getting them in the first place. The rule in preventing bedsores is making sure that the areas where possible pressure is eminent like bony prominences, the pressure is not prolonged.

This includes turning residents that have difficulty in movement to sides with regular intervals, keeping residents comfortable by re-positioning them, using protective devices and giving them the right nourishment.

The Right Order of Bathing

When giving personal care such like giving a bath or grooming residents, it is important to understand the principles of PC, in order to implement measures of safety and prevent accidents.

When bathing the elderly, lukewarm water must be used along with mild soap so that they will not have skin allergies.



Proper cleaning of body parts should be done in the right order as well. You should start the procedure from the cleanest part of the body to the dirtiest. This means starting from head and moving gradually down to the feet.

When **bed bath** is performed instead of the usual bathing, change the water as frequent as possible and use wet handle towel and gloves in removing dirt from the skin especially from the reproductive organs and skin folds.

During the bathing procedure, always support residents so they will not slip or fall. Also, be observant and attentive to the resident's state or position especially if you see signs of weakness, dizziness and fainting so that you can prevent accidents. If this happens, call for assistance of another coworker or nurse without leaving the patient alone.

Prevent contamination in the use of resident's things such as towels and dispose dirty linens after the procedure is done and the patient is positioned safely.

Record the bathing and grooming procedure and the resident's reaction after the procedure.