

Perineal Care

● SKILL SNAPSHOT

Purpose

- Cleanses the genital/perineal area, protects skin, reduces odor/infection risk, and promotes comfort and dignity.

When to use

- Routine hygiene, incontinence, catheter care, postpartum care, before urine collection/procedures, or when self-care is limited.

Supplies needed

- Warm water; mild soap/perineal cleanser; washcloths/wipes; towels/pad; gloves; clean brief/linens; skin barrier; basin.

● PREP + PATIENT SETUP

- Assess mobility, pain, continence, skin, wounds, discharge, odor, devices, and ability to participate.
- Explain procedure, offer toileting, provide privacy, and warm the room.
- Position safely and expose only the area being

● VAULT TIP

- Use one clean stroke per surface and move from cleanest to most contaminated.

● STEP-BY-STEP

1. Hand hygiene; identify patient; gather supplies and apply gloves.
2. Place waterproof pad beneath hips and position dorsal recumbent, side-lying, or other safe position.
3. For vulvar care, separate labia with nondominant hand. Clean front to back from least contaminated to most contaminated using a fresh area each stroke.
4. Clean far labial fold, near labial fold, then center over urethral opening toward anus. Never wipe back toward urethra.
5. For penile care, retract foreskin gently if uncircumcised. Clean from meatus outward in circular strokes using a clean area each pass.
6. Clean shaft, scrotum, groin folds, then perineum and anus from front to back.
7. Return foreskin to natural position immediately after cleansing to prevent paraphimosis.
8. For an indwelling catheter, stabilize tubing and clean from meatus outward along catheter; do not pull or disconnect system.
9. Rinse if cleanser requires it and pat skin thoroughly dry, especially in folds.
10. Inspect for erythema, moisture injury, pressure injury, lesions, swelling, discharge, bleeding, odor, and pain.
11. Apply a thin compatible moisture barrier when indicated; avoid trapping moisture in folds.
12. Replace brief/linens, position comfortably, dispose of supplies, remove gloves, and perform hand hygiene.

● SAFETY REMINDERS

- Always clean front to back.
- Return foreskin after care.
- Do not tug catheter or break closed drainage system.
- Report unexplained lesions, discharge, bleeding, severe pain, or skin breakdown.

● COMMON MISTAKES

- Reusing the same wipe surface.
- Cleaning anus toward urethra.
- Leaving skin damp.
- Forgetting to replace foreskin.

● DOCUMENTATION

- Skin/mucosal assessment.
- Care and barrier product used.
- Discharge, odor, lesions, bleeding, pain.
- Catheter/perineal device condition.
- Tolerance, teaching, notifications.