

---

# GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING PERSONAL CARE: TEACHING PLAN

---

## Lesson overview

*Time: One hour*

This session covers the essential elements of providing or assisting with a resident's personal care. Facility policies and state regulations vary regarding personal care given by unlicensed direct care workers. Before teaching this lesson, you should be familiar with those regulations and policies.

## Learning goals

*At the end of this session, the learner will know:*

1. How to respect the rights and privacy and maintain the comfort and safety of a resident during the personal care process.
2. How to correctly provide and assist with all major aspects of personal care and grooming.

## Teaching plan

*Ideally, the skills in this lesson should be taught by demonstrating them on a volunteer or a mannequin. It may be difficult for you to do this in your setting. If you are able to arrange for demonstrations and practice of the skills, it is best to do so. If not, substitute the procedures here, using memory work and discussion along with some demonstration. Give each learner a copy of the learning guide.*

- 1) Ask the learners to imagine for a minute that they are unable to take care of themselves and must have someone else help them with their personal cleanliness and grooming. As they think about this, ask them to say what they think their greatest need is in this situation. What is important to them as someone else provides their personal care?
- 2) After a few minutes of discussion, suggest these three important rules of personal care assistance:
  - a) Respect privacy, dignity, and choices.
  - b) Maintain safety and comfort.
  - c) Observe condition and report problems.

Instruct the learners to write these rules down on the learning guide. Explain that you will now discuss specific personal care procedures.

## Section 1: Dressing

*Bring a large jogging suit or scrub suit to the classroom.*

1. Ask for a volunteer to come up and be "dressed." Demonstrate the way to dress and undress a resident by putting the jogging suit or scrubs on over the volunteer's clothes. Follow the learning guide procedure.
2. Ask why it is important to put pants on the resident when he is either sitting down or lying down. Be sure your learners understand that this procedure is the only safe way to assist with dressing the lower body.

## Section 2: Bathing and shaving

1. Ask each learner to read one of the seven steps of bathing assistance in turn until all seven have been read aloud. Then ask the learners to cover up the learning guide and say the seven steps from memory, either working as a group or individually. Continue working on this until they are able to recite the steps in order. The learners do not need to recite each step in the exact words given, but they should be able to state the main idea.
2. Review the definitions of partial bath and soaks with the learners. Clarify your facility's bathing policies and procedures as needed.
3. Repeat the exercise in step 1 above, this time using the **procedure for shaving**. Learners should practice until they can say the six steps of the shaving procedure from memory.

## Section 3: Other personal care assistance

1. Review the procedures for hair and nail care with the learners, encouraging discussion.
2. Clarify your facility's policies regarding fingernail and toenail care. Most facilities do not allow direct care staff to trim or clip nails.
3. Discuss the procedures for oral care.
4. If desired, review bedbound care procedures.

## Conclusion: Test and certificate

1. Have the learners complete the test and grade it in class, using the answer key. Give signed certificates to those who score 75% or higher.

# GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING PERSONAL CARE: LEARNING GUIDE

## The essentials

Write the three basic rules for providing or assisting with personal care (your teacher will tell you, or look on the teaching plan for self-study):

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Dressing assistance

Encourage the resident to select the clothing if possible. Make sure it is clean and neat. As you assist, watch for signs of dizziness or unsteadiness and be sure the resident is properly supported.

1. Dress and undress the upper body first.
2. If the resident has a weak side because of a stroke or other disability, dress that side first.
3. Put the resident's footwear on before he or she gets out of bed.

### To put on pants:

1. Have the resident sit down.
2. Put on underwear, socks, and pants, pulling the underwear and pants as high as the thighs.
3. Put on shoes and help the resident stand up, then pull the underwear & pants all the way up.
4. If the resident cannot sit up, ask her to raise her hips off the bed while you pull the pants up.

### To remove pants:

1. Remove shoes and help resident lie down.
2. Unfasten pants, and pull pants off while resident raises hips off bed by pushing with feet.

## Bathing assistance

When assisting a resident with a tub bath or shower, be alert to slippery floors, overly hot water, drafts, or dizziness.

### **Procedure for tub or shower bath:**

1. Assemble soap, washcloth, towel, and gloves. Clean the floor of the shower if resident is taking a shower.
2. Place a rubber mat on the shower floor and a towel or mat on the tub bottom. Put a bath mat in front of the tub or shower.
3. Fill tub or get shower water to a comfortable 105–110 degrees.
4. Assist the resident to remove clothing and carefully enter the tub or shower.
5. Let the resident wash as much as possible, then wash any areas the resident cannot reach.
6. Assist the resident out of the tub or shower and assist to pat dry (pat, don't rub) and dress.
7. Clean the tub or shower.

### **Definitions of partial bath and soaks:**

**Soak:** Place a body part in water for a period of time—usually warm water between 105–110 deg.

**Sitz:** Soak the perineal area in warm water.

**Partial bath:** Bathe only certain parts of the body. Residents may need you to assist only with parts they can't reach, such as the back, or they may prefer to wash only certain areas on some days to prevent the dry skin that can be caused by daily all-over bathing. Often this term refers to washing only these areas: the face, the armpits, the perineum (private parts), the hands, and the feet.

### **Procedure for shaving:**

1. Resident should be sitting up if possible. Assemble razor, soap, shaving cream/lotion, towel, washcloth.
2. Cover the chest and neck with a towel. Have warm (105–110 degrees) water handy in a basin or sink.
3. Wash the face and neck to soften the beard.
4. Rub shaving cream over the beard, or use shaving lotion for an electric razor if appropriate.
5. Hold head steady with one hand and shave with the other, using smooth downward strokes on the face and upward strokes on the neck and under the chin.
6. Wipe clean.

*If you cut a resident's skin with a razor, apply direct pressure to the cut with your gloved finger until the bleeding stops.*

## Hair and nail care assistance

### Procedure for brushing hair:

1. Place resident in a sitting position.
2. Cover the resident's shoulders (and pillow, if in bed) with a towel.
3. Remove glasses, hairpins, and clips.
4. Brush gently in sections.
5. Remove tangles without pulling or tugging.
6. Style in the manner the resident requests.

Clean hair is necessary for good grooming. You may need to assist the resident in the tub or shower, or you may need to wash the hair in bed.

### Procedure for washing hair:

- 1) Water temperature must be 105–110 degrees.
- 2) Hair should be brushed before washing.
- 3) Give the resident a towel to cover the eyes while washing the hair.
- 4) Wet hair thoroughly before applying shampoo. Warm the shampoo in your hands before putting it on the resident's head.
- 5) Massage the resident's scalp as you lather the shampoo.
- 6) Rinse the hair and wrap it in a towel. Dry the resident's face.
- 7) Comb the hair and dry it with a hair dryer or put it in rollers, styling as the resident requests.

### Procedure for washing hair in bed:

Follow the same steps as above, with the use of a shampoo trough as follows:

1. Have the resident lie down without a pillow, with the head and shoulders on the side of the bed nearest you (but don't have the resident too close to the edge of the bed).
2. Use a shampoo trough under the resident's head, with a basin on a chair next to the bed so the water flows from the trough into the basin. Remove the trough when finished.

**Nail Care:** Soak, clean, and shape fingernails and toenails with an emery board. Only trim nails if you have your supervisor's permission.

## Oral care assistance

### Procedure for handling dentures:

1. Handle with gauze so you have a good grip on the dentures.
2. Use only cold water to wash and soak dentures. Hot water can warp them.
3. Use denture cleaner to brush the dentures. Only store in the resident's personal holder.

### Procedure for brushing teeth:

Everyone should brush their teeth at the beginning and end of every day, and after meals if possible. If you assist with oral care, be sure to wear gloves.

1. Cover clothing and linens with a towel.
2. Use a wet toothbrush and toothpaste.
3. Use a gentle horizontal back-and-forth motion for brushing the inside and outside of the teeth.
4. When brushing the inside of the front teeth, hold the brush at an angle and use a side-to-side motion.
5. Be careful not to cause choking or gagging by putting the brush too far into the mouth.
6. Allow resident to rinse with a glass of water and spit it out, then wipe his or her mouth.

**Oral care in bed:** When assisting a bedbound resident, raise the resident to a sitting position if possible, or place him on his side. Follow the steps given above, using a basin for spitting.

### Procedure for flossing teeth:

1. Take about 18 inches of dental floss and wrap the ends around the middle finger of each hand. Wind around one finger until fingers are about eight inches apart.
2. Use your thumbs and index fingers to position the floss between each tooth. Gently move the floss up and down against the teeth, moving from tooth to tooth.
3. Unwind new floss about every other tooth, winding the used floss around the other finger.
4. Let the resident rinse.

## **Bathing the bedbound resident**

### **Procedure for bed bath:**

Bed baths are given to residents who can't get out of bed for reasons that may be either temporary or permanent. The resident's entire body is washed one part at a time. The bath is usually given after elimination has occurred and is given along with oral care and a change of bed linens.

**To avoid irritating the resident's skin, always pat with the washcloth and towel; don't rub.**

1. Place the resident in a supine (lying down) position and cover with a blanket.
2. Remove the resident's clothing, keeping him or her covered with the blanket.
3. Assemble equipment (basin, washcloth, soap, gloves, towel) and fill the basin with warm water. The water temperature should be between 105 and 110 degrees.
4. Put on disposable gloves. Place a towel over the resident's chest and blanket.
5. Wet the washcloth in the basin and form a mitt around your hand with the washcloth.
6. Wipe the resident's eyes with the washcloth and clear water, using a different corner of the mitt for each eye so you don't spread infection. Wipe each eye gently from the inside corner out.
7. Apply soap to your washcloth mitt. Wash the face, neck, ears, and behind the ears with the soapy mitt, then rinse and pat dry.
8. Place a towel under the resident's far arm and wash the arm, shoulder, and underarm with a soapy mitt. Support the resident's elbow as you wash the arm. Rinse and pat dry.
9. Put the basin on the bed and place the resident's hand in the water. Wash the hands and between the fingers with soap and water. Clean under the fingernails carefully. Dry the hand and cover the arm with the blanket. \*Repeat steps #8 and #9 for the near arm and hand.
10. Pull the blanket back to the waist and cover the resident's chest with the towel. Lift the towel to wash the chest with a soapy mitt. Rinse and pat dry. Wash, rinse, and dry thoroughly under the female breast.
11. Repeat for the abdomen, keeping the resident covered everywhere besides the abdomen.
12. Place a towel under the far leg. Support the leg under the knee while washing, rinsing, and drying.
13. Wash the foot and between the toes in the basin, dry thoroughly, and cover the leg with the blanket. \*Repeat steps #12 and #13 for the near leg and foot.
14. Change the bath water. Turn resident on side, facing away from you. Put a towel on the bed beside the back. Uncover the back and buttocks and wash, rinse, and dry from neck to buttocks.
15. Provide perineal care last. Perineal care involves cleaning the private parts, or the genitals and anus.

### **Perineal care:**

1. Protect the bed with a waterproof pad under the resident's hips.
2. Lift the knees so the resident's feet are flat on the bed.

### **For females:**

Spread the folds of genital skin (labia) apart and wipe each side from the front toward the back in one motion. Use a clean part of the cloth for each side. Replace the cloth as necessary. Repeat until clean, then rinse and pat dry.

### **For males:**

Lift the penis and wipe around the tip in a circular motion, then rinse.

Wash the shaft of the penis by wiping from the tip to the base and rinsing.

Wash and rinse each side of the scrotum (testicles) and the inside of the thighs. Pat everything dry.

### **Anal area:** (sometimes called the rectum or rectal area)

Turn resident on side, facing away from you.

Wipe the anal area from the front of the genitals toward the back in one motion.

Wipe first with toilet paper, then wash one side at a time with a clean area of the washcloth. Replace the washcloth as needed.

---

---

## GUIDELINES FOR PROVIDING PERSONAL CARE: TEST

---

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Number correct: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Must score a total of 75%, or 15 correct answers out of 20)

1. Use only: (circle one) a. hot water b. cold water to wash, rinse, and soak dentures.
2. Follow these steps and techniques when shaving a man's face (circle two—worth 2 pts.):
  - a. Apply shaving cream, shave face, then wash face
  - b. Wash face, apply shaving cream, shave face, wipe clean
  - c. Cover chest and neck, wash face, apply shaving cream, shave face, wipe clean
  - d. Use downward strokes on the face and upward strokes on the neck
  - e. Use upward strokes on the face and downward strokes on the neck
3. Water temperature for personal care (showering, bathing, shampooing) should be between \_\_\_\_\_ degrees and \_\_\_\_\_ degrees (worth two points).
4. Before washing a resident's hair, the hair should be \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A partial bath means:
  - a. Bathing only certain parts of the body
  - b. Bathing without soap
  - c. Bathing once a week
6. You are assisting a resident with a shower. Put the following procedures in the correct order by placing the numbers 1–7 in front of the appropriate procedure (worth 7 pts).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Help the resident undress and get into the shower
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Get the shower water to the right temperature
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Assemble equipment and clean the floor of the shower
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Clean the shower
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Let the resident wash, then wash any areas he or she can't reach
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Put a rubber mat on the shower floor and a bath mat in front of the shower
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Help the resident out of the shower and assist with drying and dressing
7. When assisting with dressing or undressing, the: (circle one) a. lower half b. upper half should be dressed and undressed first.
8. The correct procedure for assisting a resident in removing pants is:
  - a. Have the resident stand up while you pull the pants down and he steps out of them
  - b. Have the resident lie down and push his hips off the bed with his feet while you pull the pants off
  - c. Pull the pants off the bottom of one leg while the resident stands on the other leg
9. Write the three rules to remember when providing personal care (worth four points):
  1. Respect \_\_\_\_\_, dignity, and choices.
  2. Observe \_\_\_\_\_ and report problems.
  3. Maintain safety and \_\_\_\_\_.