

Chapter 15

HAIR CARE

What You Will Learn

- Three purposes of hair care
- When hair care should be done
- Observations to make when giving hair care
- Specific measures related to hair care
- How to comb/brush hair according to proper procedure
- How to give a shampoo during tub bath/shower bath according to proper procedure
- How to give a bed shampoo according to proper procedure

Purposes of Hair Care

Good hair care is important as a morale booster and for maintaining a clean and attractive appearance. It cleans hair of dirt particles and dead cells and prevents matting. Brushing the hair stimulates circulation of the scalp and brings nutrients to the roots.

When Hair Care Should be Done

The hair should be combed or brushed each morning and during the day as needed. Hair should be washed at least weekly and more often if indicated in the service plan. Younger clients may have their hair washed daily because their hair is oilier. Some clients are able to comb or brush their own hair using assistive devices (see Figure 15.1).

*Figure 15.1,
Large-Handle
Hair Brush*



Observations to Make

When giving hair care to the client observe the scalp for sores or redness. Look for swollen areas or places the client tells you are painful. A dry scalp can result in dandruff and flaking. Remember to report your observations to the nurse/supervisor.

Specific Measures Related to Hair Care

When combing or brushing the hair, place a towel around client's shoulders to prevent hair from getting onto clean clothes. Style the client's hair according to their preference. Be sure to clean comb and brush AFTER EACH USE. NEVER trim the client's hair.

When giving shampoo, the water temperature should be 105° F. In addition, the room should be free of drafts, preferably 75° to 80° F to prevent chilling. If using a nozzle to apply water to the hair, keep one finger in the stream of water to ensure correct temperature. After washing the client's hair, rinse all soap from scalp to prevent irritation and dryness.

Hair texture can range from thick and coarse to thin and silky. Clients with thick and coarse hair have special hair care needs. The hair and scalp may be oiled lightly each week per the client's or family's request. A shampoo should be given every week or two. If the hair is washed too often, it dries out and breaks off. To wash coarse, thick hair, use a good softening shampoo such as a baby shampoo or a special professional shampoo. Because the hair tangles easily, use a conditioning detangler.

After rinsing the hair, gently towel dry. Use a wide-toothed comb to comb through the hair while it is damp. Apply a hair dressing if requested by the client. If the hair is to be braided, do so while it is damp, it takes about four hours for braided hair to dry naturally. After it is braided, you can use a hair bonnet dryer or blow-dryer to dry the hair more quickly. Also, you can let the hair dry by allowing it to hang loose. However, you must constantly comb the hair to prevent tangles. Then apply a hair cream/dressing to the hair and braid.

If the client requests her hair curled, roll each section of hair on a roller. Some clients may wish you to apply a setting lotion to each section of hair before curling it. Cover the hair with a net if desired. The hair is now ready to be dried. Once dried, unroll the hair and style as desired.

Use hair dryers with extreme caution. Check the air temperature frequently. If using a handheld dryer, keep your hand under the air stream so you will know what the temperature is. Do not use a hair dryer while the client is in the tub because the dryer may come in contact with water and cause electrocution. The hair dryer should be on low setting.

Provide the client with assistive devices per the service plan to increase the client's independence.

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PROCEDURE FOR COMBING/BRUSHING HAIR:

1. Gather necessary equipment.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Place a towel across the pillow if the client is in bed. For the sitting client, place a towel around shoulders.
6. If the client wears eyeglasses, remove them and put them in a safe place. Remove hairpins, combs, etc.
7. Brush or comb hair gently using downward strokes. To remove tangles, start at the bottom of the hair and work toward the scalp.
8. Arrange hair as desired by the client.
9. Replace eyeglasses if previously removed.
10. Remove, clean, and store equipment.
11. Wash your hands.
12. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

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PROCEDURE FOR GIVING A SHAMPOO DURING TUB BATH/SHOWER BATH:

1. Gather necessary equipment.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Adjust water temperature to 105° F.
6. Position client appropriately in tub or shower.
7. Ask client to hold folded washcloth over eyes.
8. Apply water to the hair until it is completely wet using nozzle or pitcher.
9. Apply a small amount of shampoo. Work up lather, massaging well with fingertips.
10. Rinse thoroughly, working from front to back.
11. Repeat washing and rinsing, if necessary.
12. Apply conditioner if desired. Rinse thoroughly.
13. Towel-dry the client's hair gently.
14. Encourage the client to comb his own hair to remove snarls and tangles, if able.
15. Apply rollers or set hair if this is to be done.
16. Dry hair with a hair dryer if desired.
17. If used, remove curlers when hair is dry. Comb or brush hair and arrange as client desires.
18. Make the client comfortable.
19. Remove, clean, and store equipment.
20. Wash your hands.
21. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

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PROCEDURE FOR GIVING A BED SHAMPOO:

1. Gather necessary equipment.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Raise adjustable bed to its highest horizontal position.
6. Place chair or footstool at the side of the bed near the client's head and cover with a small towel. Set basin or bucket on chair.
7. Move client to side of bed. Cover with bath blanket and fanfold top linens to foot of bed without exposing the client.
8. Remove pillow and replace with a thick towel.
9. Place one towel under client's head and one around shoulders.
10. Place shampoo trough or plastic under head to form a drain into the bucket.
11. Put a cotton ball in each ear of the client.
12. Apply water to hair until it is completely wet, using a pitcher.
13. Apply small amount of shampoo. Work up lather while massaging with fingertips.
14. Rinse thoroughly, working from front to back.
15. Repeat washing and rinsing, if necessary.
16. Apply conditioner if desired. Rinse thoroughly.
17. Squeeze excess water from hair, apply towel to hair.
18. Remove shampoo trough and place in bucket.
19. Remove cotton balls from client's ears. Use another towel to dry client's hair.
20. Encourage client to comb own hair to remove snarls and tangles if able.

21. Apply rollers or set hair if this is to be done.
22. Dry hair with a hair dryer if desired.
23. When hair is dry, remove curlers. Comb or brush hair and arrange as client desires.
24. Make the client comfortable.
25. Remove, clean, and store equipment.
26. Wash your hands.
27. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

Chapter Review

1. What are the three purposes of hair care?
2. When should hair care be done?
3. What observations can you make when giving hair care?
4. What are some specific measures related to hair care?
5. How do you comb or brush hair according to proper procedure?
6. How do you give a shampoo during tub bath/shower bath according to proper procedure?
7. How do you give a bed shampoo according to proper procedure?

Student Exercise

Complete the following short-answer questions.

1. List three purposes of hair care.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
2. When should the following hair care be done?
 - a. Combing and brushing –
 - b. Shampooing hair –

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

3. Which of the following are appropriate observations to make while doing hair care?
 - a. Corns and calluses
 - b. Halitosis and swollen gums
 - c. Sores and dandruff
 - d. Tooth decay and plaque
4. Which of the following statements is correct regarding hair care?
 - a. Style hair according to the client's preference.
 - b. If the client does not have a comb, borrow one.
 - c. Clean the client's comb and brush on a weekly basis.
 - d. The optimum room temperature for shampooing hair is 65 - 70° F.