

Chapter 18

BED BATH

What You Will Learn

- The four purposes of bathing
- The difference between a complete bed bath and a partial bed bath
- Specific measures related to giving a bed bath
- How to give complete bed bath according to proper procedure

Purposes of Bathing

Bathing is an important part of personal hygiene. Bathing cleans the skin and makes the client more comfortable. It stimulates the circulation and relaxes the client. It is a good opportunity to observe the condition of the client's body as well as communicate with the client.

Complete Bed Bath versus Partial Bed Bath

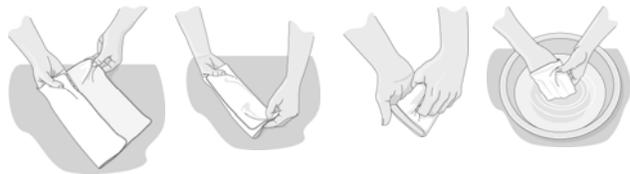
A complete bed bath involves washing the entire body. A partial bed bath involves washing the face, hands, underarms and genital/perineal area.

Specific Measures Related to Giving a Bed Bath

Offer the bedpan/urinal before starting the bath.

Warm water can stimulate the urge to urinate or defecate. Water temperature is warmer for a bed bath (115° F) than a shower or tub bath because it cools quickly at the bedside. Change the water when it becomes soapy, cold or dirty. Clean, fresh water is necessary to clean the client.

Figure 18.1, Washcloth Mitt



Washing the farthest extremity first prevents dripping water across the part you have already cleaned. Use a washcloth mitt when washing the client. This helps you to avoid dangling the ends of the washcloth, which allows water to drip onto the client (see Figure 18.1).

Place the hands and feet in a basin of water (if client is able). This is relaxing, makes the client feel cleaner, and helps soften the nails. Nail care may be administered at this time. Do not leave soap in water. Use a soap dish or washcloth to prevent the bath water from becoming too soapy. Rinse all soap from skin to prevent it from drying the skin.

Remember to treat clients with dignity and respect during this very personal activity.

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PROCEDURE FOR A COMPLETE BED BATH:

NOTE: EQUIPMENT FOR ORAL HYGIENE, SHAVING, HAIR, AND NAIL CARE IS NEEDED ONLY IF SUCH CARE IS BEING COMPLETED AT THIS TIME.

CAUTION: IF NECESSARY FOR THE CLIENT (PER SERVICE PLAN), ELEVATE THE SIDE RAILS WHEN LEAVING THE BEDSIDE.

1. Gather necessary equipment.
2. Wash your hands. Put on gloves.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Offer bedpan/urinal then empty, clean, and put it away.
6. Remove gloves and discard in appropriate container. Wash hands. Put on clean gloves.
7. Place client in supine position near the side of the bed nearest you.
8. Un-tuck bed linens.
9. Remove bedspread and blanket; fold and place on chair if reusing; otherwise, place in laundry basket.
10. Cover top sheet with a large towel. Ask the client to hold the towel in place; if unable, tuck under client's shoulders.
11. Remove top sheet without disturbing the towel and place in laundry basket at bedside.
12. Remove client's gown or pajamas.
13. Fill bath basin 2/3 full of warm water (115° F). Check temperature with inner aspect of arm.
14. Place a towel across the client's chest.
15. Wet washcloth and squeeze out excess water. Make a washcloth mitt.
16. Wash eyes first. Start at inner corner and work out. Use different area of washcloth for each eye. Don't dangle the ends of the washcloth.

NOTE: DO NOT USE SOAP ON OR NEAR THE CLIENT'S EYES.

17. Wash, rinse, and dry face, ears, nose, and mouth.

NOTE: ASK THE CLIENT IF HE WANTS SOAP USED ON HIS FACE.

18. Wash, rinse, and dry neck.

19. Expose arm farther from you; place towel under arm up to axilla.

20. If the client is able, place a basin of water on the bed and immerse client's hand in water and wash.

21. Wash and rinse far shoulder, axilla, arm, and hand.

22. Remove the basin and dry the client's arm, shoulder, and hand.

23. Repeat steps 21-23 with arm closer to you.

24. The In-Home Aide may perform fingernail care at this time.

25. Place towel across chest.

26. Wash and rinse chest and breasts while lifting towel.

27. Dry skin thoroughly.

28. Keep chest covered with towel.

29. Wash, rinse, and dry abdomen.

30. Change bath water in basin. Obtain a clean washcloth.

31. Expose the farther leg; flex (bend) leg and place bath towel lengthwise under the leg up to the buttocks.

32. Wash and rinse leg and foot.

33. Dry leg, foot, and in between toes.

34. Repeat steps 32-34 on leg nearer you; cover client with bath blanket.

35. May perform toenail care at this time.

36. Place the towel and washcloth in a laundry basket and get clean ones.

37. Change bath water in basin. Obtain a clean washcloth.

38. Ask or assist the client to turn on his side with back towards you.

39. Fold a towel over the client's side to expose his back and buttocks; place clean towel parallel to client's back.
40. Wash, rinse, and dry the client's back and buttocks.
41. Give backrub using warmed lotion.
42. Turn client to back; place clean towel under buttocks.
43. If client is able, provide wash cloth, soap, and towel and instruct him to wash and dry peri area.
44. If the client is unable, wash peri area from front to back.
45. Place dirty linen in appropriate container.
46. Remove and dispose of gloves. Wash hands.
47. If client did own peri care, provide fresh water for client to wash hands.
48. Apply warmed lotion and deodorant as needed.
49. Put clean clothing on client without exposing him.
50. Remove, clean, and store equipment.
51. Wash your hands.
52. Make the client comfortable.
53. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

NOTE: LINENS ARE USUALLY CHANGED WHEN THE BED BATH IS COMPLETED, USING THE PROCEDURE FOR OCCUPIED BED MAKING.

Chapter Review

1. What are the four purposes of bathing?
2. What is the difference between a complete bed bath and a partial bed bath?
3. What are specific measures related to giving a bed bath?
4. How do you give a complete bed bath according to proper procedure?

Student Exercise

Complete the following short-answer questions

1. List the four purposes of bathing a client.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

2. Explain the difference between a complete bed bath and a partial bed bath.

3. In what order should the following areas be bathed during a bed bath? Number from 1 to 11 in the correct sequence.

___ neck

___ eyes

___ arms

___ abdomen

___ back

___ genitals/peri area

___ feet

___ legs

___ face

___ buttocks

___ chest and breasts

Circle the letter that corresponds to the correct answer.

4. Which of the following statements is correct regarding a bed bath?
 - a. Water applied to the skin during a bath can make a client feel like he had to urinate.
 - b. A washcloth mitten is used as a restraint for the client's hand during a bed bath.
 - c. Water used for a bed bath should be a cooler temperature than water used for a tub bath.
 - d. Wash the extremity closest to you first to avoid bending and dripping water on the client.