

12.8.13: Procedure- Transfer from Wheelchair to Shower and Assisting with Shower

Assisting a patient who is in a wheelchair to bathe is an important task of the Home Health Aide/Personal Care Aide. A patient may be assisted into the shower from a wheelchair by using a gait belt and being guided first to sit on the edge of the tub and then to move into the shower. Home Health Aides/Personal Care Aides should always stay in the same room as patients who are weak or frail. Encourage the patient to provide as much care for themselves as possible. Provide assistance as needed.

1. Explain the procedure to the patient.
2. Wash your hands and don gloves as needed.
3. Ensure all equipment needed is gathered (shower chair, bathing supplies, and bath linens).
4. Fill the tub with water. Check the temperature to ensure it is no more than 105 degrees Fahrenheit.
5. Place the wheelchair at an angle, facing the shower between the grab bars or safety rails.
6. Ensure wheelchair locks are on. Raise or remove footrests.
7. If using a gait belt, ensure it is secure and that the patient has a shirt or towel on, with the gait belt positioned over their clothing. This is to prevent skin irritation and breakdown. Instruct the patient, or assist with moving to the edge of the wheelchair seat.
8. Assist the patient in placing one leg at a time over the edge of the tub.
9. Instruct the patient to grab onto the bars or the side of the tub and assist them into a sitting position on the edge of the tub.
10. Assist the patient into the tub by instructing or lowering the patient into the tub. They will be sitting in the tub. They may take a bath or shower depending on their preference.
11. Place toiletries and bath linens in patient's reach. Provide for privacy.
12. If the patient is weak, or requests, stay nearby and assist as needed.
13. Ensure all soap is rinsed off the patient and that their skin is thoroughly dried.
14. Assist the patient out of the shower in the reverse way that you helped them into the shower.
15. Assist with dressing as needed.
16. Put away equipment and supplies. Place soiled clothing and linens in the appropriate place. Clean shower/tub.
17. If the patient begins to fall during a transfer, widen your stance. Bring the patient's body close to you to provide support. Bend your knees and using the strength of your thighs, lower the patient to the ground. Home Health Aides/Personal Care Aides should report the near fall or any actual falls immediately to their supervisor. If the patient falls, do not attempt to get the patient up alone. The agency may require the patient gets evaluated by a nurse before helping the patient back up. Report any injuries or concerns. Home Health Aides/Personal Care Aides will also likely be required to complete an incident report, and should seek direction from their supervisor about completing the incident report.
18. Remove gloves if wearing and wash your hands.
19. Document the procedure and any observations or changes in condition.

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