



Bathing resistant residents

As a CNA, personal care, such as **assisting with bathing**, is part of your daily assignments. However, you will often run into a resident who resists bathing.

This **CNA Training Advisor** will teach you how to handle **resistant residents** who do not want to bathe. It will walk you through steps of what to do to handle a situation involving a resistant resident.

This lesson will also cover the three essential rules for **personal care** and **grooming**. You'll also learn the **benefits of bathing**, which will help you explain to a hesitant resident why they need to bathe on a regular basis.

Remember, **resident safety** can be compromised during bathing, as things tend to get slippery.

It is important for CNAs to learn how to perform a **proper bathing procedure**, even for **bed-bound** residents. At the end of the lesson, CNAs will be given a checklist (see p. 4) that describes a step-by-step process for bathing a resident.

Have a good day of training, and stay tuned for next month's **CNA Training Advisor** on supervising the wanderer.

About your CNA training advisor

Judith Ryan, RN, BSN, is the senior advisor for **CNA Training Advisor**. She is the director of staff development at Abbott House, a 55-bed nursing home in Lynn, MA. Ryan has been a nurse for 20 years. As part of her job, she is responsible for conducting in-services on a wide range of topics for CNAs.

PROGRAM PREP

Program time

Approximately 45 minutes

Learning objectives

Participants in this activity will learn how to do the following:

- Discover what might make a resistant resident ready to bathe
- Learn the three essential rules to personal care
- Identify the benefits to bathing
- Find out how to bathe bed-bound residents

Preparation

- Review the material on pp. 2–4
- Duplicate the **CNA Professor** insert for participants
- Gather equipment for participants (e.g., an attendance sheet, pencils, etc.)

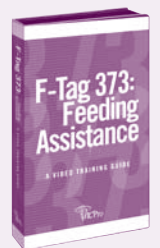
Method

1. Place a copy of **CNA Professor** and a pencil at each participant's seat
2. Conduct the questionnaire as a pretest or, if participants' reading skills are limited, as an oral posttest
3. Present the program material
4. Review the questionnaire
5. Discuss the answers

F-Tag 373: Feeding Assistance: A Video Training Guide

Under F-tag #373, nursing homes must ensure that feeding assistants are properly trained and work within the limits of their roles—or they may face CMS survey citations. *F-Tag 373: Feeding Assistance: A Video Training Guide*, uses familiar nursing home scenarios to outline CMS' requirements under F-tag #373 for feeding assistants.

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BATHING RESISTANT RESIDENTS

Some residents are resistant to bathing. Never force a resident to bathe. Instead, report the resistance to your supervisor. Often, a simple change in staff members, bathing time, or day will make the resident more agreeable and cooperative. It is important to respect any preferences a resident has.

Personal care is just that—personal—and we are all self-conscious about our bodies. Before we begin to discuss the individual procedures of personal care, imagine that you are unable to take care of yourself and must have someone else help you with your personal cleanliness and grooming, which involves exposure of and assistance with your body's private areas.

Q What do you think is a resident's greatest need in this situation?

Discuss.

Q What is most important to the resident when someone else provides his or her personal care?

Discuss.

CNAs must respect the rights and privacy of a resident at all times but must know how to help the resident maintain his or her comfort, cleanliness, and safety. No matter which aspect of personal care and grooming you perform, always keep three essential rules in mind:

1. Respect the privacy, dignity, and choices of the resident
2. Maintain the resident's safety and comfort
3. Regularly observe the resident's condition and report problems

Benefits of bathing

There are many benefits associated with bathing.

For example, it:

- Provides relaxation and comfort
- Removes dead skin cells
- Controls infection by removing microorganisms
- Provides muscle and tissue stimulation through gentle rubbing
- Eliminates body odor that develops due to the interaction of harmless microorganisms on the skin with odorless secretions of the sweat glands

Bathing also provides an opportunity for the caregiver to inspect the resident's skin. Remember to look under the breasts and in the folds of the groin. Early detection and treatment of skin problems can prevent the resident from developing pressure sores. It also reduces resident discomfort, as well as the time and costs involved in treatment.

Bathing assistance

When assisting a resident with a tub bath or shower, be aware of slippery floors, overly hot water, drafts, and/or dizziness. A common procedure to follow would be to:

1. Assemble soap, washcloth, towel, and gloves. Clean the floor of the shower if the resident is taking a shower.
2. Place a rubber mat on the tub or shower floor. Put a bath mat in front of the tub or shower.
3. Temper the tub or shower water to a comfortable 105°F–110°F.
4. Assist the resident in removing his or her clothing and help him or her carefully enter the tub or shower.
5. Let the resident wash as much as possible, and then wash any areas the resident cannot reach.
6. Assist the resident out of the tub or shower, pat him or her dry, and dress the resident. Do not rub his or her skin, as it might cause irritation.
7. Clean the tub or shower.

There are additional forms of bathing that are often useful for residents. You can assist a resident with a soak, in which a body part is placed in 105°F–110°F water for a short period of time. Then there is a sitz, in which the perineal area (i.e., private parts) is soaked.

A partial bath involves bathing only certain parts of the body. Residents might need you to assist only with parts they can't reach, such as the back, or they might prefer to wash certain areas only on some days to prevent the dry skin that is caused by daily all-over bathing. The term "partial bath" often refers to washing only the face, armpits, perineum, hands, and feet.

Q What are some important things to observe about a resident's bathing environment?

Discuss.

Bathing bed-bound residents

For most Americans, daily bathing is considered routine. For the elderly, daily bathing might be damaging to the skin. However, the face, hands, underarms, and perineal area must be cleansed daily.

Bed baths are given to residents who cannot get out of bed for temporary or permanent reasons. CNAs should wash the resident's entire body, one part at a time. The best time for a bath is usually after elimination has occurred, and it can be given along with oral care and a change of bed linens. Always allow and encourage residents to wash as much of themselves as possible.

Remember, especially with bed-bound residents, to always pat the body with a washcloth or towel. Rubbing the resident's skin might irritate it.

BATHING RESISTANT RESIDENTS

Follow this step-by-step procedure for bathing the bed-bound resident:

1. Place the resident in a supine, or lying down, position and cover him or her with a blanket.
2. Assemble all the equipment you need (e.g., a basin, a washcloth, soap, gloves, and a towel) and fill the basin with warm water. The water temperature should be 105°F–110°F.
3. Remove the resident’s clothing, keeping him or her covered with the blanket.
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 with it around your hand.
6. Wipe the resident’s eyes with the washcloth and clean 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. If the resident is alert, ask him or her whether he or she would like soap on their face. Some will not because soap tends to dry out the faces of elderly residents.

8. Apply soap to your washcloth mitt. Wash the face, neck, ears, and behind the ears, and then rinse and pat dry.
9. Place a towel under the resident’s arm that is farthest from you 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.
10. 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 arm and hand nearest to you.
11. 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 female residents’ breasts.
12. Repeat step 10 for the abdomen, keeping the resident covered everywhere besides the abdomen.
13. Place a towel under the far leg. Support the leg under the knee while washing, rinsing, and drying.
14. Wash the foot and between the toes in the basin, dry thoroughly, and cover the leg with a blanket. Repeat steps 12 and 13 for the near leg and foot.
15. Change the bath water. Turn the resident on his or her side, facing away from you. Put a towel on the bed beside the resident’s back. Uncover the back and buttocks and wash, rinse, and dry from the neck to the buttocks.
16. Provide perineal care last. ■

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BATHING RESISTANT RESIDENTS

Bathing assistance checklist

- Check the bathing area for slippery floors or drafts
- Assemble soap, washcloth, towel, and gloves
- If the resident is taking a shower, clean the floor of the shower before the resident gets in
- Place a rubber mat on the tub or shower floor
- Put a bath mat in front of the tub or shower
- Make sure the water temperature is between 105°F–110°F
- Assist the resident in removing his or her clothing
- Help the resident carefully enter the tub or shower
- Let the resident wash as much as possible, and then wash any areas the resident cannot reach
- Assist the resident out of the tub or shower
- Pat the resident dry (do not rub his or her skin, as it might cause irritation)
- Dress the resident
- Clean the tub or shower

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BATHING RESISTANT RESIDENTS

Mark the correct response.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. What should you do if a resident resists bathing?
 - a. Argue with the resident
 - b. Report the situation to your supervisor
 - c. Force him or her to bathe
 - d. All of the above
2. Something you can do to accommodate a resident that is resistant to bathing would be to _____.
 - a. change the bathing time
 - b. choose a new staff member to assist with bathing
 - c. change the scheduled day for bathing
 - d. all of the above
3. It is important to maintain a resident's privacy when bathing.
 - a. True
 - b. False
4. The only benefit to bathing is that it keeps residents clean.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. As a caregiver assisting with bathing procedures, you should always remember to _____.
 - a. inspect the resident's skin
 - b. leave the resident to bathe alone
 - c. rub the resident's skin
 - d. none of the above
6. When assisting with bathing, you should be aware of _____.
 - a. slippery floors
 - b. water temperature
 - c. drafts
 - d. all of the above
7. When bathing a resident, make sure the water temperature is between:
 - a. 100°F–105°F
 - b. 105°F–110°F
 - c. 110°F–115°F
 - d. 115°F–120°F
8. When helping a resident dry off after bathing, you should pat, not rub, the skin.
 - a. True
 - b. False
9. A bed bath is for residents who _____.
 - a. do not want to get out of bed
 - b. don't want a full bath
 - c. are not able to get out of bed
 - d. all of the above
10. When performing a bed bath, you should complete perineal care first.
 - a. True
 - b. False