

NURSE AIDE CURRICULUM SKILL PERFORMANCE CHECKLIST

Name: _____

Providing Postmortem Care 2.04

*Discussion / Demo

Postmortem care is the care of the resident after death and takes place after the resident has been declared dead by a nurse or doctor. Postmortem care varies from one healthcare facility to another. Understand the basic care concepts of the deceased resident will provide guidelines when assigned to perform postmortem care.

General Guidelines: Postmortem Care

1. Muscles in the body become stiff and rigid after death making it more difficult to move the body. Talk to the nurse if help is needed in moving and positioning the body.
2. Bathe the body being very gentle to avoid bruising. Place drainage pads (bed protection) under the perineum (the genital and anal area) and or head as needed. Follow Standard Precautions.
3. Do not remove any tubes or other equipment. The nurse is responsible for this.
4. Put dentures back in the mouth and close the mouth if instructed to do so. A rolled towel under the chin is helpful in supporting the closed mouth position. If dentures are not placed in the mouth, place the dentures in a denture cup near the resident's head.
5. Carefully close the eyes.
6. Position the body on the back with legs straight and arms folded across the abdomen. Place a small pillow or a folded towel under the head.
7. Follow facility policy as it relates to personal items. Check to see if you should remove jewelry. Always have a witness if personal items are removed or given to family members. Document what was given to whom.
8. Strip the bed after the body has been removed.
9. Open windows to air the room as needed and straighten up room.
10. Document according to your facility's policy.

Organ Donation

- If a resident has been designated as an organ donor after death, specific policies and procedures will need to be followed.
- Nurse Aides should follow the instructions regarding special preparations or transport.

Comforting Others

- The Nurse Aide should show family and friends to a comfortable and private place to sit and talk without feeling rushed.
- Provide water or another beverage, chairs, and facial tissues.
- The NA should talk little and listen much. Simple statements such as "I am sorry" or "your mother will be missed" are fine. Avoid clichés.
- The goal is to be supportive, kind, and respectful.