

## Lesson 58: Administering a Sitz Bath

### I. Introduction

- A. A *sitz bath* is administered by immersing only a resident's hips and buttocks into water or saline solution.
- B. The sitz bath procedure is used for residents who have had rectal or perineal surgery, to relieve pain of *hemorrhoids* or to relieve other perineal irritation. It will also increase circulation and reduce inflammation.
- C. A sitz bath can also be called a "*hip bath*."

### II. Procedure - Using a Commercial Kit

1. Check the order. The physician will prescribe the length of time for the treatment, which is usually 15-30 minutes.
2. When using a commercial kit, open the package and familiarize yourself with the equipment.
3. Adjust water temperature to a warm temperature both comfortable and tolerable for the resident. Fill the basin with water to the specified line and place the basin under the commode seat.
4. Clamp the irrigation tubing to block water flow and fill the irrigation bag with water of the same temperature as that in the basin.
5. To create flow pressure, hang the bag above the resident's head on a hook, towel rack or I.V. pole.
6. Perform INITIAL STEPS.
7. Ask the resident to void. Then, take his/her pulse to serve as a baseline in gauging response to treatment.
8. Assist the resident to the bath area and provide privacy.
9. Remove and dispose of any soiled dressings.
10. Assist the resident onto the commode. Instruct him/her to use the safety rail for balance. Explain that initially the sensation in the affected area may be unpleasant because of tenderness already present.
11. If the resident's feet do not reach the floor, place a small stool under the resident's feet to prevent the weight of his/her legs from pressing against the edge of the equipment.
12. Cover the resident's shoulders with a bath blanket, if needed, to avoid chilling.
13. Open the clamp on the irrigation tubing to allow a continuous flow of warm water over the affected area.
14. Refill the bag with warm water as needed.
15. Stay with the resident throughout the sitz bath.
16. Check the resident's pulse, color and general condition frequently. If the resident feels weak, faint or nauseated, discontinue the bath and assist the resident back to bed. Notify the nurse.
17. When the prescribed bath time has elapsed (usually 15-30 minutes) assist the resident to use the safety rail for balance and assist to slowly stand to prevent dizziness and regain balance.
18. Assist resident to dry. Redress area as needed and assist the resident to dress and return to room.
19. Advise the resident to lie in bed for approximately 30 minutes to allow circulation to return to normal. Continue to monitor pulse.
20. Dispose of soiled material. The commercial kit may be stored at resident bedside for future use.
21. Perform FINAL STEPS.

### III. Procedure - Using a Public/Community Tub

1. Make certain the sitz tub is clean. Always wear gloves when cleaning the sitz bath tub.
2. Check the order. The physician will prescribe the length of time for the treatment, which is usually from 15 to 30 minutes.
3. Prepare the resident and provide for the resident's privacy.
4. Fill the sitz tub to the required depth with water of the specified temperature. The resident's body will displace the water in proportion to size.
5. Place a large bath towel in the bottom of the sitz tub. If needed, place the drain adapter in place so the sitz tub drains continuously.
6. Perform INITIAL STEPS.

