

Caregiving in  
The Comfort of Home®  
**Caregiver Assistance News**

“CARING FOR YOU... CARING FOR OTHERS”

## Activities of Daily Living - Personal Hygiene

As a caregiver, you may find that some of your time each day will be devoted to assisting the person in your care with personal hygiene. This includes bathing, shampooing, oral or mouth care, shaving, and foot care.

### The Shower Bath

Before starting, be sure the shower floor is not slippery. Also make sure there are grab bars, a bath bench, and a rubber mat so the person doesn't slide. A removable shower head is also useful. Note, remove from the bathing area all electrical equipment that could get wet.

1. Make sure the room is a comfortable temperature.
2. Explain to the person what you are going to do.
3. Provide a shower stool in case he or she needs to sit.
4. Gather supplies—mild soap, washcloth, washbasin, comb, razor, shampoo—and clean clothes.
5. Turn on the cold water and then the hot to prevent burns. Test and adjust the water temperature before the person gets in. Use gentle water pressure.
6. First, spray and clean the less sensitive parts of the body such as the feet.
7. For safety, ask the person to hold the grab bar or to sit on the shower stool.

8. Move the water hose around the person rather than asking the person to move.

9. Assist in washing as needed.

10. Guide the person out of the shower and wrap with a towel. Turn the water off.

11. Apply lotion to skin that appears dry.

12. If necessary, put down a towel and have the person sit on a stool or on the toilet lid to dry off.

13. Assist in drying and dressing.



### The Tub Bath

If the person in your care has good mobility and is strong enough to get in and out of the tub, he or she may enjoy a tub bath. Be sure there are grab bars, a bath bench, and a rubber mat so the person doesn't slide. (It may be easier to sit at bench level rather than at the bottom of the tub.)

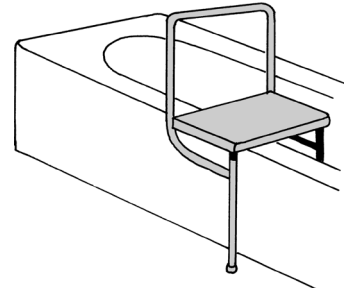
Use the following steps:

1. Make sure the room is a comfortable temperature.
2. Gather supplies—disposable gloves for the caregiver, mild soap, washcloth, lotion, comb, electric razor, shampoo—and clean clothes.

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3. Check the water temperature before the person gets in.
4. Guide the person into the tub. Have the person use the grab bars. (Don't let the person grab you and pull you down.)
5. Help the person wash.
6. Empty the tub and then help the person get out.
7. Guide the person to use the grab bars while getting out. OR, you can have the person stand up and then sit on the bath bench. Swing first one leg, then the other leg over the edge of the tub. Help him stand.
8. Put a towel on a chair or the toilet lid and have the person sit there to dry off.
9. Apply lotion to any skin that appears dry.
10. Help the person dress.



If a bath bench is not used, many people feel more secure if they turn on to their side and then get on their knees before rising from the tub. This is a very helpful way to get out of the tub if the person is unsteady and a bath bench is not available.

## **Nail Care**

When providing nail care, you can watch for signs of irritation or infection. This is especially important in a person with diabetes, for whom a small infection can develop into something more serious. Fingernails and toenails can thicken with age, which will make them more difficult to trim. If other members of the household are using the same grooming supplies, clean the shared items, such as nail clippers, with alcohol.

1. Assemble supplies—soap, basin with water, towel, nailbrush, scissors, nail clippers, file, and lotion.
2. Wash your hands.
3. Wash the hands of the person in your care with soap and water and soak the hands in a basin of warm water for 5 minutes.
4. Gently scrub the nails with the brush to remove trapped dirt.
5. Dry the nails and gently push back the skin around the nails (the cuticle) with the towel.
6. To prevent ingrown nails, cut nails straight across.
7. File gently to smooth the edges.
8. Gently massage the person's hands and feet with lotion.

## Taking Care of Yourself—Get Your Flu Shot!

According to the CDC, people 65 years and older accounted for approximately 58% of reported influenza-associated hospitalizations. Overall, flu hospitalization rates during 2017-2018 were the highest ever recorded.

Vaccination is the single best way to help protect against the flu. Vaccination is especially important for older adults. Flu vaccine saves lives and prevents the serious complications that sometimes result. Caregivers of all ages should get their flu

shot and should take preventive measures, such as washing hands, staying away from people who are sick with the flu and encouraging others to cover their coughs. But be aware that these preventative steps cannot replace vaccination, which is still the best method of protection.

Source: CDC; [www.ncoa.org/Flu](http://www.ncoa.org/Flu)



Never use an electric razor if the person is receiving oxygen because of the risk of fire if the electric razor sparks.

### Inspiration

*A man is about as big as the things that make him angry.*

~ Winston Churchill

## Live Life Laughing!

You know, human beings are the only creatures on earth that allow their children to move back home.



## Memory Care - Bathing

Bathing is often called the most challenging activity for both the person with dementia and the caregiver. Standing naked, afraid of falling, in a room that may be drafty, with water coming from all kinds of unexpected places may result in pain, fatigue, weakness, confusion, and anxiety for the person with Alzheimer's disease. These feelings may also exist before the bath and get worse because of the bath.

## Caregiving in The Comfort of Home®

### Our Purpose

To provide caregivers with critical information enabling them to do their job with confidence, pride, and competence.

### Ordering Info

From the publishers of

*Caregiving in  
The Comfort of Home®  
Caregiver Series*

### available from...

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## SAFETY TIPS—Bathroom Safety

Many accidents happen in bathrooms, so check the safety of the bathroom.

- ✓ Cover all sharp edges with rubber cushioning.
- ✓ Remove locks on bathroom doors.
- ✓ Use nonskid safety strips or a nonslip bath mat in the tub or shower.
- ✓ Install grab bars in shower.
- ✓ Remove glass shower doors or replace them with unbreakable plastic or tempered safety glass.
- ✓ Place a bath and shower seat in the tub or shower.
- ✓ Use electrical appliances with a ground fault interrupted (GFI) feature.
- ✓ Set the hot water thermostat below 120° and cover hot water pipes to prevent burns.
- ✓ Use faucets that mix hot and cold water, or paint hot water knobs/faucets red.
- ✓ Put in toilet guard-rails or provide a portable toilet seat with built-in rails.

# Caregiver Assistance News

“ C A R I N G F O R Y O U ... C A R I N G F O R O T H E R S ”

## Q U I C K Q U I Z

How often a bath is needed is based on the situation of the person in your care. For example, if urinary incontinence (leakage), bowel problems, and heavy perspiration are present, a daily bath may be in order. If not, bathing two to three times a week might be enough. Read the issue and answer True or False to the questions below.

1. It is important to first remove from the bathing area all electrical equipment that could get wet.  
T F
2. When assisting a tub bath, be sure there are grab bars, a bath bench, and a rubber mat so the person doesn't slide.  
T F
3. If a bath bench is not used, many people feel more secure if they turn on to their side and then get on their knees before rising from the tub.  
T F
4. Fingernails and toenails can thicken with age, which will make them more difficult to trim.  
T F
5. Vaccination is the single best way to help protect against the flu.  
T F
6. As a caregiver, you may find that some of your time each day will be devoted to assisting the person in your care with personal hygiene.  
T F
7. It is *not* important to check the water temperature before the person gets in the bath or shower.  
T F
8. Accidents don't often happen in bathrooms.  
T F
9. To prevent scalding, set the hot water thermostat below 120° F.  
T F
10. Never use an electric razor if the person is receiving oxygen because of the risk of causing a fire if the electric razor sparks.  
T F

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_