



Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

CLINICAL

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

SUBJECT: BATHING VENTILATOR DEPENDENT
PATIENTS

Policy No.: C137.17
Effective Date: 04/1999
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Purpose: To identify modifications needed when bathing a ventilator-dependent patient

Physician's Order Required: No

Exception: When special considerations are indicated e.g., spinal instability, recent surgical procedure

Performed By: Ventilator competent RN, LVN, NA, RA, or SNW or non-ventilator competent RN, LVN, CNA, RA and Affiliating Student Nurses under the supervision of a ventilator competent staff

Equipment Required:

Suctioning supplies including a fully charged, battery operated suction machine with appropriate settings
Portable ventilator using an external battery source with settings as ordered
Oxygen prn
Patient's emergency respiratory equipment bag
Bathing trolley/shower commode chair
Bathing supplies
Tracheostomy care supplies – see Nursing policy C143 Tracheostomy Care

Policy Statements:

1. Ventilator competent staff are to assist and or supervise the non-ventilator competent staff with transporting and bathing of ventilator-dependent patients.
2. A bag-valve-mask device will be available at all times during transport and bathing.
3. A ventilator competent licensed staff is to assist with bathing ventilator dependent patients.

Procedural Steps:

1. Explain procedure to patient, family, and/or caregiver.
2. Ensure portable ventilator and suction equipment are functioning and suction equipment is set up in the bathing room.
3. Suction prior to transport to bathing room prn
4. Maintain ventilation during transport
 - a. Avoid pulling on tracheostomy tube
 - b. A bag-valve-mask device or portable ventilator may be used
5. Maintain ventilation during bathing
 - a. A bag-valve-mask device or portable ventilator may be used
 - b. **Only use a portable ventilator operating with an external battery**
6. Observe patient's respiratory status throughout procedure

7. Prevent water or cleansing products from entering tracheostomy stoma by covering with a dry washcloth and elevating head
8. If signs/symptoms of respiratory distress is noted:
 - a. Stop bathing procedure
 - b. Ventilate using bag-valve-mask device
 - c. Suction prn
9. After bathing, perform tracheostomy care and change twill tape/Velcro tube holder.

Documentation:

Document bath in electronic health record

Patient/Family Education:

1. Instruct patient, family, and/or caregiver regarding:
 - Bathing procedure and positioning
 - Maintaining patent airway
 - Signs & symptoms of respiratory discomfort or distress and interventions
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Reviewed by: Elizabeth Thompson, RN, BSN

References:

Yoon, K.H. (2022). Management and rehabilitation of spinal cord injuries. New York, NY: Springer

Hoeman, S. (2008). Rehabilitation nursing: *Prevention, intervention, and outcomes*. (4th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: Elsevier/Mosby.

04/99 – Revised
05/02 – Reviewed
11/04 – Reviewed
03/07 – Reviewed
04/11 – Revised
11/14 – Revised
12/17 – Revised
02/21 – Revised
12/23 - Reviewed