WASHING A COVID-19 POSITIVE PATIENT

Before starting, wash your hands with soap and water. Keep the items you will need in the patient’s room, so you do not need to go in and out of the room. Try and limit your time in the room to 15 minutes at a time.

• Patients can be washed sitting at the bedside or lying in bed.
• The method used will depend on the energy levels and physical capabilities of the patient.
• Patients can be washed sitting at the bedside or lying in bed.
• Remove the patient’s clothes. If very cold you can remove the clothing one section at a time as you wash that section of the body.

If washing the patient in the bed, remove all pillows and blankets from the bed to make moving easier, except for a pillow beneath the patient’s head if needed. Leave the pillows behind a patient if the patient is very short of breath and struggles to lie flat, or rather wash them in an upright position.

Start by washing the face, ears and neck. As you wash each section of the body dry it immediately after with a towel, so they do not get cold.

Next wash the arms, chest and abdomen. While washing to protect the linen, place the towel under the section of body being washed. e.g.: when washing the arms place the towel under the arm on the arm, once washed use the towel to dry the arm and swap to the other side.

Once finished roll the patient onto their back again and wash the genitals. Again, wash from the front to the back. Rinse the cloth in between. Check the buttocks for redness, this area often develops pressure sores first. Apply cream to the area once dry, rubbing in circular motions.

Next wash the back. If the patient is lying in the bed you will need to roll the patient onto their side. To do this: bend the patients knee on the leg closest to you, and ask the patient to wrap their arm (closest to you) around their stomach as if they are giving themselves a ‘hug’, once they are in this position gently place your one hand on their hip and your other hand on their shoulder and roll them away from you, onto their side in the bed. Now you can place the towel on the bed under their back and wash their back and hip area. While washing rub in circular motions to massage the skin and help get the blood flowing. Apply cream once you have dried this area. If sitting on the side of the bed simply wash their back while they are sitting. When needing to wash the buttocks and genitalia, ask the patient to stand, while at the same time they can support themselves by holding onto the back of a chair, so they do not fall.

If the patient is lying on their side in bed, you can move the towel down slightly and wash their buttocks. Wash from the front to the back. Rinse the cloth in between. Check the buttocks for redness, this area often develops pressure sores first. Apply cream to the area once dry, rubbing in circular motions.

Once finished roll the patient onto their back again and wash the genitals. Again, wash from the front to the back. Re-dress the patient in clean clothes. Deodorant can be applied for a fresh smell.

Next wash the arms, chest and abdomen. While washing to protect the linen, place the towel under the section of body being washed. e.g.: when washing the arms place the towel under the arm on the arm, once washed use the towel to dry the arm and swap to the other side.

Once finished roll the patient onto their back again and wash the genitals. Again, wash from the front to the back. Re-dress the patient in clean clothes. Deodorant can be applied for a fresh smell.

WASHING A BED-BOUND PATIENT

1. Try and warm the room for washing so the patient does not get cold. If there is no heater or water bottle available, try wash the patient later in the morning when it is not so cold outside. At all times during the wash make sure that the parts of the body not being washed are covered by a sheet, blanket or extra towel.
2. Use soap (bar or liquid) and water. Keep the items you will need in the patient’s room, so you do not need to go in and out of the room. Try and limit your time in the room to 15 minutes at a time.

3. Remove the patient’s clothes. If very cold you can remove the clothing one section at a time as you wash that section of the body.
4. Wash the patient’s arms, chest and abdomen. While washing to protect the linen, place the towel under the section of body being washed. e.g.: when washing the arms place the towel under the arm on the arm, once washed use the towel to dry the arm and swap to the other side.
5. Once finished roll the patient onto their back again and wash the genitals. Again, wash from the front to the back. Rinse the cloth in between. Check the buttocks for redness, this area often develops pressure sores first. Apply cream to the area once dry, rubbing in circular motions.
6. Next wash the arms, chest and abdomen. While washing to protect the linen, place the towel under the section of body being washed. e.g.: when washing the arms place the towel under the arm on the arm, once washed use the towel to dry the arm and swap to the other side.
7. Once finished roll the patient onto their back again and wash the genitals. Again, wash from the front to the back. Re-dress the patient in clean clothes. Deodorant can be applied for a fresh smell.

CAREGIVER TIPS

YOU WILL NEED:
• A bucket/basin with warm water
• A towel
• A cloth/ponge for washing
• Soap (bar or liquid)
• Clean clothes
• Cream for skin (e.g.: PREP, Aqueous cream)

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