Oh No…It’s Bath Day!

Alzheimer Conference 2011

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TUB ROOMS... THEN & NOW!
Anne Louise Barrick, Joanne Rader, Beverly Hoeffer, Philip D. Sloane, *Bathing Without A Battle*, 2002
What do you think?

“Sooner or later Joe needs to get into that tub – we just can’t leave him!”

“The family expects us to give him a bath.”
“A person-centred approach takes more time – we don’t have time for extra care.”

Sound familiar?!
SESSION OUTLINE

1. What behaviours are we talking about?

2. Bath time from the person with dementia’s perspective

3. Interventions:
   - bathing room environment
   - communication, responding to behaviours
   - bathing techniques
What behavioural symptoms do caregivers find the most difficult during bathing?

- RESISTIVE BEHAVIOURS (pulling away, attempting to leave area)
- VOCAL AGITATION (calling out, yelling)
- VOCAL AGGRESSION (cursing, threatening)
- PHYSICIAL AGGRESSION (hitting, biting, grabbing, pushing)
“It is not the activity itself that causes the behavioural symptoms but rather the PERSON’S EXPERIENCE OF THE SITUATION from the time of the invitation to the completion of the bath.”

Bathing Without A Battle, Chapter 1 – Understanding The Battle, pg.6)
So what is the person with dementia’s experience during bathing?

- FEAR
- LOSS OF CONTROL
- COLD
- PAIN
- 7 A’s
ADAPTING THE ENVIRONMENT

A. Visual environment

- eliminate clutter
- eliminate signs, notices, instructions
- what does the person look at during bathing?
  - pictures, prints
  - shelves with decorative vases, color towels
- decorative borders, stenciling on walls
- wall scone lighting rather than bright fluorescents
A TYPICAL PCH BATHING AREA
What do you think?
BATHING ENVIRONMENT – LIGHTING

Fluorescents

Wall Lighting
B. **NOISE**
- hearing others in bathroom area – voices
- others opening /closing doors, sound of running water, whirlpool jets can be upsetting
- use sound absorbent materials – tiles, curtains
- consider therapeutic sounds - music

C. **TEMPERATURE**
- room should have extra source of heat, consider heat lamps, radiant heat (permanently mounted on wall or ceiling)
- eliminate drafts

D. **EQUIPMENT COMFORT**
- colored non-slip grab bars
- non-slip flooring
- pad tub chairs
ADDRESSING PERSONAL NEEDS

KEEP THE PERSON COVERED
- wash one area at a time
- used towels and heated blankets

MOVE THE PERSON SLOWLY
- prepare them prior to moving them
- minimize the number of moves during bath

CONSIDER NEED FOR PAIN CONTROL BEFORE BATH
- start with least sensitive area
- use a gentle touch and soft cloths
- pat person dry, don’t rub
COMMUNICATION

- Encourage self-care as appropriate
- Engage the person in conversation, use distraction
- Give compliments, praise and humor as appropriate
- Constantly tell the person what you are doing
- Adjust your language to the person’s ability to understand
- Be aware of non-verbal
- Follow the person’s lead
- Apologize if the person shows distress
RESPONDING TO BEHAVIOUR DURING BATHING

UNDERSTANDING THE PERSON

- History
- Physical Health
- Personality / Mood
- Preferences For Bathing
- Level Of Dementia
LOOKING FOR TRIGGERS

- Personal Factors (fear, modesty, pain, etc.)
- Acute Illnesses
- Your relationship with them
- Physical Environment
- Organizational Environment (schedule, routines, etc.)

Every behaviour has meaning!
BATHING TECHNIQUES

1. HAIR WASHING

- wash hair last when bathing
- wash hair separately from bath
- try washing in hair salon sink
- inflatable sink (bed, chair)
- waterless, no rinse shampoo cap
WATERLESS SHAMPOO CAP
MORE HAIR WASHING IDEAS...

INFLATABLE SINK

SHOWERING CAPE
2. TOWEL BATH (bed, recliner, chair)

Useful for people who are:
- frail, fatigue easily
- continually fearful of tub and/or lifts
- display behaviour in a tub that may affect their safety or the safety of caregivers
- experiencing acute illness
- experiencing severe pain with transfers, moves

SEE HAND-OUT FOR INSTRUCTIONS

(Bathing Without A Battle DVD)
FINAL THOUGHTS:

- Focus on the PERSON more than the TASK
- Adjust your approach to meet the needs of the person
- Use persuasion, not coercion
- Be prepared before the bath
- Stop when a person becomes distressed
- Talk with others, use your care team to find ways that work best
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