

Oral Hygiene: Levels of Care Procedures

Step 1: Complete Oral Health Assessment and Care Plan Guide to determine appropriate level of oral care

Step 2: Refer below for specific information regarding levels of oral care

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| <p>Tips for all levels of oral hygiene:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete with a toothbrush at all times; clean the tongue, teeth, cheeks and palate. Dentures must be removed during care and brushed. Use a toothbrush and warm water or toothpaste. Complete at 90-degree angle when possible; alternatively, head of the bed at a 30-45 degree angle. Lip moisturizers may be applied for comfort as needed. Refer to regional standard nursing text as necessary. |
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| Level | Frequency | Procedure | | | |
|---|------------------------|--|--|----|--|
| LEVEL 1: INDEPENDENT | AM/PM | Provide materials (toothbrush, K basin, face cloth, oral care product, denture adhesive, etc.); provide verbal reminders. | | | |
| LEVEL 2: ASSIST | AM/PM | Provide materials assist with set-up, help when needed, and check for effectiveness. | | | |
| LEVEL 3: TOTAL ASSIST | AM/PM | Provide oral care using a toothbrush and toothpaste or water. Consider two-toothbrush technique or bite block. | | | |
| LEVEL 4: THICKENED FLUIDS | AM/PM, after PO intake | Use thickened non-foaming oral care product and toothbrush. Apply water-based mouth moisturizer. Use Yankauer suctioning as appropriate. | | | |
| LEVEL 5: NPO DUE TO SWALLOW IMPAIRMENT | Every 4-8 hours | Every 4-8 hours: | Use thickened non-foaming oral care product, toothbrush and Yankauer suctioning to clean surfaces of mouth. Apply water-based mouth moisturizer. | | |
| | | OR | | | |
| | | As ordered by prescriber: | Use a suction toothbrush kit when patient is in SCU or acutely ill. | | |
| LEVEL 6: VENTILATED | Every 2 hours | Every 8 hours: | Use a suction toothbrush kit if available | OR | Use a toothbrush, water, and Yankauer suction. |
| | | | Apply 1.5% hydrogen peroxide with toothbrush or as a spray. Apply water-based mouth moisturizer. | | |
| | | In addition, every 2 hours: | Use a toothbrush and water. Suction oral cavity with Yankauer suction. | | |
| | | Once per day, as ordered by prescriber: | Apply Chlorhexidine 0.12% with a toothbrush or spray. Do not apply Chlorhexidine and hydrogen peroxide in same oral care session. | | |
| LEVEL 7: END OF LIFE | AM/PM at minimum | Use toothbrush as tolerated. Alternatively, use gauze or a cloth moistened with water to clean the mouth. Apply a water-based moisturizer gel or spray to the inner surfaces of the mouth, tongue and lips as necessary. | | | |