



Caring for Hair and Face

By: [CVH Team](#)

Caring for hair

Illness tends to make people perspire, making their hair damp and sometimes tangled. Brushing someone's hair regularly can be a thoughtful gesture. Hair can be washed in the shower or tub, at the kitchen table with a basin, or in bed surrounded by soaker pads to prevent the bed from getting wet.

To wash a person's hair in bed:

- Organize towels, containers to hold clean and dirty water, shampoo and the patient's regular comb or brush.
- Gently move the person to the head of the bed so that their head is slightly over the edge.
- Cover the bed with garbage bags or 'soaker pads' to keep it from getting wet and place a pail on the floor below to catch the dirty water.
- Wet the person's hair with clean warm water, gently shampoo and massage the person's head.
- Rinse well using warm water, collecting the water in the pail on the floor.

Another option for washing hair in bed is to use commercial shampoo caps. These products are often available in pharmacies or shops that sell medical equipment. Shampoo caps are infused with a rinse-free shampoo and conditioner for single use. The cap is warmed in the microwave. The hair is then massaged through the cap for several minutes then removed. There is no rinsing required.

Haircuts can also be given at home, in hospice, or in hospital. Consider asking the person's regular hairdresser to come out to cut or style the person's hair.

Care of the face

Some people feel better when they follow their regular routines. Women who regularly wear make-up may want assistance in putting it on. Men who normally shave every day will likely appreciate remaining clean shaven. Always use caution if shaving someone with a safety razor.

Some medications cause women to grow more facial hair and they may want this to be removed. Some people may want to check their appearance with the help of a small hand mirror, while others may be less concerned about how they look.

Care of the nose

If the person is receiving oxygen through tubes placed just inside each nostril, the inside of the nose may feel dry. Using a water-based lubricant can help make the nose feel better. Clipping and trimming nasal hairs may also be helpful.

Petroleum based lubricants such as Vaseline® are **not** recommended for nose care when oxygen tubing is being used.

See Video

[Personal Hygiene - Caring for hair](#)

[Personal Hygiene - Caring for the skin](#)

For more information about providing hands-on care, see [Module 6](#) of the Caregiver Series.

For additional resources and tools to support you in your caregiving role visit [CaregiversCAN](#).

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