

Caregiver Assistance News

“Caring for You - Caring for Others”

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

*Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence,
Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio*

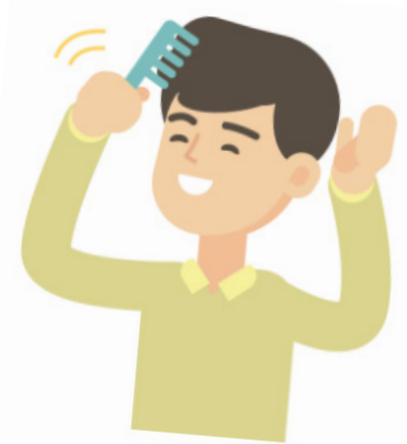
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NOVEMBER 2024

Grooming: Hair, Nails and Shaving

In the early stage of Alzheimer’s disease (AD), you may simply need to remind the person to attend to his or her personal care needs. Some people with AD lose their former high standard of personal hygiene. This can be upsetting to the people around them. Sometimes, this is because of memory problems. For example, they may go into the bathroom to take a shower, forget why they are there, come back out, and when asked, say that they have showered. Remember, they are not lying, but saying what they are supposed to say or believe to be true. They may have forgotten whether or not they have showered and even become annoyed that you are questioning them.



As always, don’t argue. You can suggest later that they shower. As with all personal care activities, try to follow the person’s usual and same routine as much as possible from day to day. Most people are used to grooming in the early morning and then again late at night. If the person is able to do these tasks on their own, simply observe and make sure that the tasks are being completed and not forgotten. These activities help provide a predictable structure for the day.

Shampooing the Hair

Keeping the hair and scalp clean improves blood flow to the scalp and keeps the hair healthy. If the person has oily hair, you may want to shampoo daily which helps eliminate buildup of product and excess oil, which can clog pores and lead to scalp irritation and sensitivity. People with dandruff may also want to shampoo once a day. Dandruff is not caused by dry skin, but by a yeast-like fungus that feeds on scalp oil and can inflame the scalp’s skin, causing it to flake off. Shampooing daily can get rid of the fungi that cause the dandruff.

Wet Shampoo

Shampooing can be done anytime the person in your care is not overly tired. Before a bath may be the most convenient time. Adopt a system that is easiest for you and the person in your care. To make washing easier, dilute the shampoo in a bottle before pouring it on the hair.

1. Assemble supplies—disposable gloves, comb and brush, shampoo/conditioner, several pitchers of warm water, large basin, washcloth, towels.
2. Have the person sit on a chair or commode.

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3. Drape a large towel over the person's shoulders.
4. Gently comb out any knots.
5. Protect the person's ears with cotton.
6. Ask the person to cover his or her eyes with a washcloth and to lean over the sink.
7. Moisten the hair with a wet washcloth or with water poured from a pitcher.
8. Massage a small amount of diluted shampoo into the hair.
9. Remove the shampoo with clean water or a washcloth until the rinse water or cloth runs clear.
10. Use a leave-in conditioner, if desired.
11. Towel the hair dry and remove the cotton from the ears.
12. Comb the hair gently.
13. If desired, use a hair dryer on the cool setting to dry hair, being very careful not to burn the scalp.



- OR -

1. Cut a round slit at the raised edge of a heavy rubber dish-draining mat so that the end can tuck under the person's neck and the water can drain down into the sink.
2. Seat the person at the kitchen sink with their back to the mat.
3. Place a towel on the person's shoulders and place the rubber dish-draining mat with the round cut against the neck and the smooth edge draining into the sink (beauty salon style).
4. Follow the procedure above, using the sink hose or a pitcher to wash and rinse the hair.

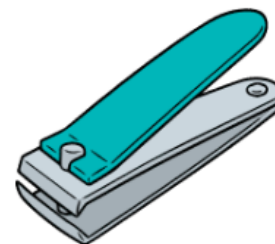
Dry Shampoo

1. Assemble supplies—disposable gloves for the caregiver, comb and brush, waterless shampoo, and towels.
2. Lather the head until all foam disappears. Towel hair dry and gently comb.

Nail Care

When providing nail care, you can watch for signs of irritation or infection. This is especially important in a person with diabetes, for whom a small infection can develop into something more serious. Fingernails and toenails can thicken with age, which will make them more difficult to trim.

1. Assemble supplies—soap, basin with water, towel, nailbrush, scissors, nail clippers, file, and lotion.
2. Wash your hands and the hands of the person in your care with soap and water. Soak their hands in a basin of warm water for 5 minutes.
3. Gently scrub the nails with the brush to remove trapped dirt.
4. Dry the nails and gently push back the skin around the nails (the cuticle) with the towel.
5. To prevent ingrown nails, cut nails straight across and gently file to smooth the edges.
6. Gently massage the person's hands and feet with lotion.



Taking Care of Yourself



Thanksgiving Stress

Thanksgiving is coming and it is an opportunity to change out of casual clothes and dress up for a change of pace. Treat yourself to a new haircut, put on a favorite dress or shirt, and head out to celebrate. Dressing up can be a real mood booster. When you look your best, you feel your best.

For some, Thanksgiving dinner can be stressful when our expectations are high, but there are anxiety-producing comments. Be ready with some answers such as, "why do you ask me that?" or deflect the comment with "you may be right, I'll think about it." We all have people who can irritate us with an intrusive and thoughtless comment; however, think about whether this Thanksgiving you want to just let it go.

Source: *How to Avoid Awkward Thanksgiving Dinner Conversations: Tips From Experts - The New York Times* (nytimes.com)



November is National Family Caregivers Month

**Thank You Caregivers for all you do!
You are appreciated!!**

**THANK
YOU!**
♥



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Fridays - Fall 2024

10:00 am - LIVE on Facebook

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Memory Care

Shampooing

If the person does not want a shampoo, a no-rinse shampoo can be substituted for a regular shampoo. People beyond the early stage of Alzheimer's disease should not be left alone in the bathroom.



Safety Tips - Shaving

Shaving can be done by the person in your care, or you can shave his whiskers with a safety razor or an electric razor. If he wears dentures, make sure they are in his mouth. Note, never use an electric razor if the person is receiving oxygen because of the risk of causing a fire if the electric razor sparks.



1. Assemble supplies—disposable gloves, safety razor, shaving cream, washcloth, towel, lotion, and wash your hands.
2. Adjust the light so that you can clearly see his face, but it is not shining in his eyes.
3. Spread a towel under his chin and soften the beard by wetting the face with a warm, damp washcloth.
4. Apply shaving cream to his face, carefully avoiding the eyes.
5. Hold the skin tight with one hand and using short, firm strokes shave in the direction the hair grows. Be careful of sensitive areas.
6. Rinse his skin with a wet washcloth and pat his face dry with the towel. Apply lotion if the skin appears dry.

Some content in this publication is excerpted from “The Comfort of Home: Caregivers Series”. It is for informational use and not health advice. It is not meant to replace medical care but to supplement it. The publisher assumes no liability with respect to the accuracy, completeness or application of information presented, or the reader’s misunderstanding of the text.



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Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. serves the following counties in Ohio: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. Services are rendered on a non-discriminatory basis. Those interested in learning more about the services provided through the Area Agency on Aging District 7 can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277. Here, individuals can talk directly with a trained Resource Specialist who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs.

The Agency can also be reached via email at info@aaa7.org.