

Alzheimer's Disease--Bathing

"Mother just refuses to take a bath now...it's such a struggle to keep her clean. She was always very meticulous about how she looked before and now it's a fight to get her in the tub."

- Try to follow as many of the person's old routines as possible (morning vs. evening; bath vs. shower)
- Simplify tasks and try to do one step at a time (e.g. run water, towels ready, undress, etc.)
- Allow as much independence as possible. Remember to respect the person's privacy and sense of dignity.
- Try to be as calm and gentle as possible. Try not to rush or force the person through the task. Talk him through, if needed.
- Adjust your expectations, if need be. A bath may not be necessary everyday, though it is important to keep them clean. If the person is incontinent, it will be especially important to keep the genital and buttocks area clean to promote good health.
- Be flexible and creative. A sponge bath can serve the same purpose as a bath or shower, but may be more acceptable to the person being bathed, because she can remain partially covered.
- Work towards a safe and inviting environment - be sure the room is warm, the water is a comfortable temperature, and the tub is equipped with a non-skid surface and a grab bar. Do not leave hair dryers or razors within reach of a confused person.

Supporting Arkansas Families Since 1984

Alzheimer's Arkansas Programs and Services is an independent non-profit 501(c)(3) organization governed by a local volunteer Board of Directors.

Our services include:

- 24 hour telephone support
- Family and professional education
- Support groups for patients and caregivers
- Financial assistance
- Community awareness presentations
- Monthly newsletter and Lending Library

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