

WARM APPLICATIONS:

WARM SOAKS

A favorite treatment of mine:

- Treats many ailments
- Employs body's own mechanisms

Things you should know:²

- Dr. order/assignment
- Facility policy
- Training

Purposes:²

- Pain & muscle tension
- Relaxation & sleep
- Increases circulation by dilation
 - *Blood stream and Lymphatic system
 - ~Drainage of swollen tissues
 - ~Immune system defense
 - incl increased body temp
 - ~Oxygen and nutrients like carbohydrates & protein
 - cell metabolism
 - tissue repair
- Cleansing⁴
 - *Debris and necrotic tissue
 - ~Pathogens
 - *Allow/draw toxins out
 - ~Epsom Salts

*Healing/closure from inside out ³

Special Considerations:²

-Water conducts heat

*Greater potential for injury

-Elders more susceptible to heat and cold injury

*Decreased efficiency of circulatory and lymphatic systems

*Decreased sensation

~aging or disease

*Dementia

*Fragile, thin, dry skin

Children and older adults (under the age of 5 and over 65), by virtue of their thinner skin, sustain severe burns at lower temperatures and in less time than an adult. Three seconds in water which is 140°F (the temperature of the average home's hot water as it comes from the tap) can result in a full thickness or third degree burn, which would require hospitalization and skin grafts. ¹

*Water temp check

~105-110°F

~q 5 min X 15-20 min or per order

Observe and Report:²

-Locally

*Redness and/or Pain or Discomfort

-Systemically

*Weakness, Dizziness, Light-headedness

-Anything questionable/adverse

~Remove immediately

~Report to nurse

ADMINISTERING WARM SOAKS: 2

Equipment: towel, basin, bath thermometer, bath blanket

1. Wash your hands.
2. Identify yourself by name. Identify the resident by name.
3. Explain procedure to the resident. Speak clearly, slowly, and directly. Maintain face-to-face contact whenever possible.
4. Provide for resident's privacy with curtain, screen, or door.
5. If the bed is adjustable, adjust to a safe working level, usually waist high. If the bed is movable, lock bed wheels.
6. Fill basin half full of hot (not too hot!) water. Test water temperature with thermometer or your wrist. Ensure it is safe. Water temperature should be 105° to 110° F. Have resident check water temperature. Adjust if necessary.
7. Immerse the body part in the basin. Pad the edge of the basin with a towel if needed. Use a bath blanket to cover the resident if needed for extra warmth.
8. Check water temperature every five minutes. Add hot water needed to maintain the temperature. Never add water hotter than 110° F. To prevent burns, tell the resident not to add hot water. Observe the area for redness. Discontinue the soak if the resident has pain or discomfort.
9. Soak for 15-20 minutes, or as ordered.
10. Remove basin. Use the towel to pat dry resident.
11. Place soiled clothing and linens in appropriate containers.
12. Empty, rinse, and wipe basin. Return to proper storage.
13. Make resident comfortable. Make sure sheets are free from wrinkles and the bed free from crumbs.
14. Return bed to appropriate position. Remove privacy measures.
15. Before leaving, place call light within resident's reach.
16. Wash your hands.
17. Report any changes in resident to the nurse.
18. Document procedure using facility guidelines

RESOURCES:

1 University of Utah Burn/Trauma Center Patient Education Handouts:

<http://uuhsc.utah.edu/pated/handouts/category.cfm?cat=Burn+Center&patient=>

2 *Hartman Publishing: The Nursing Assistants Handbook Second Edition-Handout MT-2: Warm and Cold Applications*

3 *THE HUMAN BODY: Skin (Interactive)*

<http://science.nationalgeographic.com/science/health-and-human-body/human-body/?source=G4101&kwid=anatomy>

4 Leg ulcer guidelines: a pocket guide for practice

http://www.guideline.gov/summary/summary.aspx?doc_id=9830