

## Chapter 16

### PERINEAL CARE

#### **What You Will Learn**

- The purposes of perineal care
- Specific measures to take while giving perineal care
- How to give perineal care to the male client according to proper procedure
- How to give perineal care to the female client according to proper procedure

#### **Purposes of Perineal Care**

Perineal care is usually called “peri care.” It means washing the genitals and anal area. Peri care can be done during a bath or as a separate procedure. Peri care prevents skin breakdown of perineal area, itching, burning, odor, and infections. Perineal care is very important in maintaining the clients' comfort. More frequent care is required for clients who are incontinent or for those who have an indwelling catheter. Make every effort to respect the modesty of clients and be gentle when cleansing this sensitive area.

#### **Specific Measures Related to Peri Care**

Other than soap and water, different products may be used when giving peri care. Some clients use a non-rinse peri-wash, a peri-wash that requires rinsing, skin-barrier creams, or pre-moistened wipes. Use peri care products according to the service plan and follow the manufacturer’s directions for use.

Always wear gloves when giving peri care to protect yourself and the client. Offer the client a bedpan/urinal or assist him to the bathroom before starting. Warm water on the perineal area may stimulate the need to urinate. Be very gentle when washing the area. The perineal area is more sensitive to temperature than the rest of the body. The water may be more comfortable if it is slightly cooler than the temperature of bath water. Position the client in the "back-lying" and/or "side-lying" position when giving peri care. A towel or bedpan may be placed under the hips to assist in peri care.

When giving peri care to the female client, observe for odors and vaginal discharge that may indicate vaginal yeast infection. Always wash from front to back to prevent spreading fecal matter from anal area to vagina or urethra (opening to bladder).

Peri care for the male client is started at the tip of the penis. For uncircumcised males, retract the foreskin, wash the tip of penis, and then return the foreskin over the tip of penis. If the foreskin is not returned, circulation can be affected which could lead to tissue damage. Make sure to rinse thoroughly and pat dry.

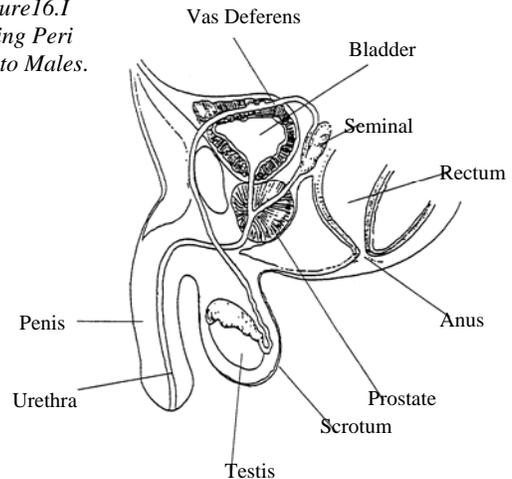
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#### PROCEDURE FOR GIVING PERI CARE TO THE MALE CLIENT:

1. Gather necessary equipment.
2. Wash your hands. Put on gloves.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Client should be in back-lying or side-lying position; place towel or bedpan under hips.
6. Fill basin with warm water.
7. Cover client with a towel or sheet.
8. Expose perineal area. Using a circular motion, gently wash the penis by lifting it and cleaning from the tip downward. Rinse and dry. (Figure 16.1)
9. Wash and rinse the scrotum.
10. Wash and rinse other skin areas between the legs.
11. Wash and rinse the anal area.
12. Pat the peri area dry.
13. May apply a light dusting of powder under scrotum to prevent rubbing on skin (optional) as per service plan.

*Figure 16.1  
Giving Peri  
Care to Males.*



**CAUTION: AVOID SHAKING POWDER OVER THE CLIENT BECAUSE IT MAY CAUSE RESPIRATORY IRRITATION FOR THE CLIENT AND/OR IN-HOME AIDE.**

14. Remove towel or sheet.
15. Remove and dispose of gloves.
16. Remove, clean, and store equipment.
17. Wash hands.
18. Make the client comfortable.
19. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

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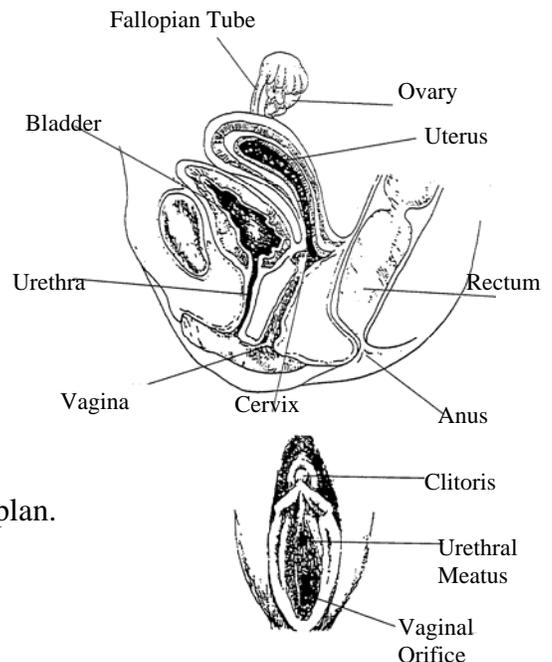
#### PROCEDURE FOR GIVING PERI CARE TO THE FEMALE CLIENT:

1. Gather necessary equipment.
2. Wash your hands. Put on gloves.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Assist client to back-lying or side-lying position; place towel or bedpan under hips.
6. Cover client with a towel or sheet.
7. Expose peri area. Gently wash the inner legs and outer peri area along the outside of the labia (see Figure 16.2).

NOTE: USE A CLEAN AREA OF WASH CLOTH FOR EACH WIPE OF PERI AREA PER SERVICE PLAN.

8. Wash the outer skin folds from front to back.
9. Wash the inner labia from front to back.
10. Gently open all skin folds and wash the inner area from front to back.
11. Rinse the area well, starting with innermost area and proceeding outward.
12. Wash and rinse the anal area.
13. Pat the peri area dry.
14. May apply a light dusting of powder to outer peri area (optional) as per service plan.
15. Remove towel, bedpan, or sheet.
16. Remove and dispose of gloves.
17. Remove, clean, and store equipment.

*Figure 16.2, Giving Peri Care to Females*



18. Wash your hands.
19. Make the client comfortable.
20. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

### **Chapter Review**

1. What are the purposes of perineal care?
2. What specific measures should be taken when giving perineal care?
3. How do you give perineal care to the male client according to proper procedure?
4. How do you give perineal care to the female client according to proper procedure?

### **Student Exercise**

**Complete the following short-answer questions.**

1. List two purposes of giving peri care.
  - a.
  - b.

**Circle the letter that corresponds to the correct answer.**

2. Which of the following statements is correct regarding perineal care?
  - a. Gloves are optional during peri care.
  - b. Wash the peri area with soap and cold water.
  - c. Wash from front to back when providing peri care.
  - d. The client lies on his/her stomach during peri care.
3. Why is the client offered the bedpan or urinal before beginning peri care?
4. When providing peri care always wash from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.