

Chapter 17

DRESSING AND UNDRESSING

What You Will Learn

- Key points of dressing and undressing
- How to assist the client to dress according to proper procedure
- How to assist the client to undress according to proper procedure
- How to apply elastic stockings according to proper procedure

Key Points of Dressing and Undressing

The In-Home Aide often helps the client with dressing and undressing. Encourage appropriate dress depending upon the weather and activities planned for the day. Remember, the elderly often have poor circulation, less body fat, and tend to be less active than younger people. They may complain of feeling cold even if you are warm. Sweaters and jackets are appropriate for many clients even in the summer because they may feel colder. Clients who use a wheelchair or geri-chair may wish to have a blanket or lap robe over their legs to help them stay warm.

Dress the client with clean clothes after bathing and anytime clothing is soiled. Encourage clients who are handicapped to wear clothes that open down the front. Never put a client's clothes on backwards. Encourage the client to select his own clothing.

Complete dress depends upon the client's wishes. Some female clients wear a bra; others may prefer a camisole or undershirt. Some male clients wear boxer shorts and some prefer briefs. The important thing to remember is that the client should be dressed in the type of underwear he chooses. If the client uses a disposable protective brief for incontinence, he may wear underwear over the brief if desired.

Shoes and stockings are important both for warmth and proper support. Always put on client's shoes before he stands up. This helps keep him from slipping.

Monitor the independent client during dressing and assist as needed with buttons, zippers or hard-to-reach areas. Provide assistive devices per service plan to allow the client increased independence when dressing. Figure 17.1 illustrates a self loop fastener (Velcro) shoe closure.

Figure 17.1



If the client has a nonfunctioning weak side, dress the arm of the weak side first.

The client who is dependent can be completely dressed before he is transferred to a chair. Elasticized stockings, sometimes called TED hose or anti-embolism stockings reduce inflammation of the veins in the leg that can cause blood clots. They also reduce edema in the legs. If used, apply elastic stockings before getting the client out of bed. Stockings should be applied evenly and smoothly. For clients who wear stockings 24 hours a day, stockings should be removed and reapplied after 30 minutes with a.m. and p.m. care.

Check the service plan regarding whether the client should wear stockings while sleeping at night. Stockings should be washed in mild soap and hung to dry every evening per nurse/supervisor direction.

Remember the importance of allowing clients to do anything they can. However, if clients are ill or disabled, the In-Home Aide will be responsible for dressing them.

Chapter 17

DRESSING AND UNDESSING

PROCEDURE FOR ASSISTING A CLIENT TO DRESS:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Gather necessary clothing.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Provide assistive devices as per service plan.
6. Assist client in removing gown, pajamas, or soiled clothing.
7. If client is in bed, put on underclothes, stockings, and pants while lying down.
8. Bra.
 - a. Instruct client to slip arms through the shoulder straps.
 - b. Position properly and fasten.
9. Undershirt/slip.
 - a. Assist or have client put arms into undershirt/slip first.
 - b. Assist or have client put head into undershirt/slip.
 - c. Check and make sure undershirt/slip does not remain rolled up on the client's back; pull down to waist.
10. Stockings/socks.
 - a. Fold the stocking down from the opening to just beyond the heel.
 - b. Support client's ankle and slip folded stocking over the toes; position it over the heel and pull it up smoothly over the leg.
11. Underpants/pants (disposable protective briefs if worn by the client).
 - a. Put both legs in pants; slide up to hips.
 - b. Have the client lift his hips and pull pants up. If the client is unable to lift his hips, turn to one side and slip pants over hip, then turn to opposite side and pull pants over the other hip.

- c. Zip the zipper and fasten snap or button (if applicable).
- d. If the client has a catheter, leave the fly open to allow for tubing then pin the fly shut. If the client has a leg bag, make sure it is not visible when he is dressed.

12. Shoes.

- a. Always help client put on shoes before standing up from bed to avoid slipping on floor.
- b. Loose laces and pull tongue of shoe forward and up.
- c. Support client's ankle as you slide the toes, foot, and heel into the shoe.

NOTE: USE A SHOEHORN, IF AVAILABLE.

- d. If possible, have the client stand and tie his shoelaces.



13. Raise the head of the bed to a near sitting or assist client into a sitting position on side of bed or into a chair at bedside.

14. Dress/shirt.

- a. Apply arm protectors per the service plan if necessary.
- b. Assist or have client put weak arm in sleeve of garment first while there is more "give."
- c. Put other arm in next.
- d. If both arms are weak, put on dress over feet then put arms in sleeves.

15. Pullover sweater or shirt is put on like undershirt.

16. Wash your hands.

17. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

Chapter 17

DRESSING AND UNDRESSING

PROCEDURE FOR ASSISTING A CLIENT TO UNDRESS:

1. Wash your hands.
2. Gather necessary clothing.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. Provide assistive devices as per service plan.
6. Assist client from chair to the bed; if he is able, have the client sit on side of bed. If the client is unable, help him to lie down.
7. Remove shoes (if client is lying down).
 - a. Loosen shoelaces and pull tongue of the shoe forward and up.
 - b. Support ankle and slide foot out of shoe.
 - c. Store shoes in closet.
8. Remove stockings.
 - a. Fold stocking down to ankle.
 - b. Support ankle and slide stocking off foot.
9. Pullover sweater or shirt.
 - a. Loosen first (unzip/unbutton) and grasp the bottom of garment at back and pull to the neck.
 - b. Pull over head.
 - c. Pull garment off the arms.
10. Dress or shirt.
 - a. Loosen and remove the sleeve of the garment from the strong arm first.
 - b. If the client is lying down, roll client and tuck the half-removed garment under client.

- c. Return the client to back; turn him slightly in the opposite direction; grasp the garment and pull out.
 - d. Remove garment from weak arm.
 - e. Follow same sequence if client is sitting up.
11. Pants/underpants.
- a. Unfasten pants at waist and unzip.
 - b. Have client stand if able and pull pants down legs.
 - c. If the client is lying down, have him lift hips up and slip pants down over buttocks. If the client is unable to do this, roll client towards you, slip pants down over hip, then return client to back, roll to opposite side, and pull pants down over other hip.
12. Undershirt/slip is removed following the same steps as for pullover sweater/shirt.
13. Bra.
- a. Unfasten bra or assist client to unfasten bra.
 - b. Slip arms out of shoulder straps.
14. Hang clean clothes like sweaters in closet. Place soiled garments in appropriate container.
15. Wash your hands.
16. Record observations and report anything unusual to nurse/supervisor.

Chapter 17

DRESSING AND UNDRESSING

PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING ELASTIC STOCKINGS:

NOTE: ELASTIC STOCKINGS ARE NOT THE SAME AS ELASTIC BANDAGES (ACE WRAPS) OR JOBST STOCKINGS. THE IN-HOME AIDE IS NOT PERMITTED TO APPLY EITHER OF THESE PRODUCTS.

1. Wash your hands.
2. Gather necessary stockings.
3. Explain what you are going to do.
4. Provide privacy.
5. With the client lying down, expose one leg at a time.
6. Grasp stocking at top with both hands and fold toward toe end with raised seams on the outside.
7. Adjust over the client's toes with opening at base of toes.
8. Apply stocking by folding upward toward the body.
9. Check to be sure the stocking is applied evenly and smoothly, without wrinkles. Avoid pulling hair on the client's legs.
10. Repeat procedure on opposite leg.
11. Wash your hands.
12. To remove elastic stockings, gently slide the stocking down the legs, over the heels, and then remove. Be careful to avoid damaging the skin or pulling the client's hair. When removing elastic stockings, observe the skin on the client's legs and feet and report anything unusual to the supervisor/nurse.

NOTE: STOCKINGS SHOULD BE WASHED IN MILD SOAP AND HUNG TO DRY PER CLIENT'S OR SUPERVISOR'S DIRECTION.

Chapter Review

1. Key points of dressing undressing.
2. How to assist the client to dress according to proper procedure.
3. How to assist the client to undress according to proper procedure.
4. How to apply elastic stockings according to proper procedure.

Student Exercise

Circle the letter that corresponds to the correct answer.

1. Elderly clients may feel colder due to:
 - a. senility.
 - b. obesity.
 - c. poorer circulation
 - d. inadequate heating systems

2. Complete dress for the clients includes:
 - a. purse and umbrella
 - b. shoes and stockings
 - c. tie and suspenders
 - d. wrist watch and jewelry

Complete the following short-answer questions.

3. List four assistive devices used for dressing.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.

4. What is the purpose of elastic stockings?

5. How should elastic stockings be washed and when should they be washed?