

Touching and perceiving Body awareness



Activity: Washing hands and body

Theme: self-reliance

Set-up of the activity

Use washing activities to stimulate touching of body parts.

0-2

- Take your time during washing activities. Name all the body parts that are being washed. Supporting the actions with songs can be helpful.
- Offer the client the option of having him hold the showerhead, face flannel or towel. State: "Now you will feel the water on your legs."
- Use the hand-under-hand method. See photo for illustration.

2-4

- Check whether the client can carry out simple actions by himself.
- Ask the client to hold out body parts, such as his arm or leg.
- Check whether the client can close the faucet after showering. Let him search for the towel or face flannel by means of touch. Make sure that these are always located in an accessible and regular place.

4-6

- Let the client carry out more and more steps himself. For example, let him wash his face, arms, legs and stomach. Name the parts that are being washed.
- Wash the difficult parts together or do it for the client, but continue to name the parts.
- Do the same while drying.

- While washing, let the client help with squeezing liquid soap or shampoo from the bottle.
- Let the client search for the bottle of shampoo or soap. Make sure that these bottles are always located in a regular and accessible place.
- Let a client in a shower chair help you wash his upper body and thighs.
- Let a client on a shower stretcher first feel the washing products. Take the time to properly massage the body parts while washing, rinsing or drying them.

Points for observation and focus

- Check which motor skills the client possesses in order to carry out the actions more independently.
- Adjust the shower spray in case of hypersensitivity to tactile stimuli (a stronger spray or a face flannel over the showerhead). Use firm pressure during the actions.
- In the beginning phase, observe closely whether a client makes small movements with his head, arm or leg in the direction they need to go when washing and drying. These movements may be the initial steps towards helping to wash and dry.

Alternative materials

- Giving a client foot baths because the feet are often noticed last. This is especially the case with clients in wheelchairs.

Can also be used in the categories

- Touch sensitivity (TST)
- Recognising (RC)