Chapter 15
Assisting With Comfort
The Person's Unit

- Patient and resident rooms are designed to provide comfort, safety, and privacy.
- The person’s unit is the personal space, furniture, and equipment provided for the person by the agency.
Temperature and ventilation

- Most healthy people are comfortable when the temperature is 68°F (Fahrenheit) to 74°F.
- The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1987 (OBRA) requires that nursing centers maintain a temperature range of 71°F to 81°F.
- To protect older and ill persons from cool areas and drafts:
  - Keep room temperatures warm.
  - Make sure they wear the correct clothing.
  - Offer lap robes to those in chairs and wheelchairs.
  - Provide enough blankets for warmth.
  - Cover them with bath blankets when giving care.
  - Move them from drafty areas.
The Person's Unit, cont'd.

- **Odors**

  - **To reduce odors:**
    - Empty, clean, and disinfect bedpans, urinals, commodes, and kidney basins promptly.
    - Make sure toilets are flushed.
    - Check incontinent persons often.
    - Clean persons who are wet or soiled from urine, feces, vomitus, or wound drainage.
    - Change wet or soiled linens and clothing promptly.
    - Keep laundry containers closed.
    - Follow agency policy for wet or soiled linens and clothing.
    - Dispose of incontinence and ostomy products promptly.
    - Provide good hygiene to prevent body and breath odors.
    - Use room deodorizers as needed and allowed by agency policy.
The Person's Unit, cont'd.

- If you smoke:
  - Follow the agency’s policy.
  - Practice hand washing after handling smoking materials and before giving care.
  - Give careful attention to your uniforms, hair, and breath.
The Person's Unit, cont'd.

• Noise
  - Common health care sounds may disturb patients and residents.
  - To decrease noise:
    • Control your voice.
    • Handle equipment carefully.
    • Keep equipment in good working order.
    • Answer phones, call lights, and intercoms promptly.
The Person's Unit, cont'd.

- **Lighting**
  - Good lighting is needed for safety and comfort.
  - Adjust lighting and window coverings to meet the person’s changing needs.
  - Keep light controls within the person’s reach.
    - This protects the right to personal choice.
The Person's Unit, cont'd.

- Room furniture and equipment
  - The bed
    - Beds have electrical or manual controls.
    - Beds are raised horizontally to reduce bending and reaching when giving care.
    - The lowest horizontal position lets the person get out of bed with ease.
    - The head of the bed is flat or raised to varying degrees.
  - Electric beds may have:
    - Controls on a side panel, bed rail, or the foot-board
    - Hand-held devices
  - Manual beds have cranks at the foot of the bed.
    - The cranks are pulled up for use.
    - They are kept down at all other times.
Bed Positions

- The six basic bed positions are:
  - The flat position
  - Fowler’s position
  - High-Fowler’s position
  - Semi-Fowler’s position
  - Trendelenburg’s position
  - Reverse Trendelenburg’s position
Bed Safety

- Bed safety involves the hospital bed system.
  - Hospital bed systems have seven entrapment zones.
  - Entrapment means that the person can get caught, trapped, or entangled in spaces created by bed rails, the mattress, the bed frame, the head-board, or foot-board.
  - Persons at greatest risk for entrapment include persons who:
    - Are older
    - Are frail
    - Are confused or disoriented
    - Are restless
    - Have uncontrolled body movements
    - Have poor muscle control
    - Are small in size
    - Are restrained
  - Always check the person for entrapment.
Furniture and Equipment

● The over-bed table
  ➢ The over-bed table is placed over the bed by sliding the base under the bed.
  ➢ Only clean and sterile items are placed on the table.
  ➢ Clean the table after using it for a work surface.

● The bedside stand
  ➢ The bedside stand has a top drawer and a lower cabinet with shelves or drawers.
  ➢ Place only clean and sterile items on top of the bedside stand.
  ➢ If you use the bedside stand for a work surface, clean it when you are done.
Furniture and Equipment, cont'd.

● Chairs
  ➢ The person’s unit always has at least one chair.
  ➢ The chair must:
    • Be comfortable and sturdy
    • Not move or tip during transfers
    • Allow the person to get in and out of it with ease

● Privacy curtains
  ➢ Each person has the right to full visual privacy (to be completely free from public view while in bed).
  ➢ Always pull the privacy curtain completely around the bed before giving care.
  ➢ Remember, privacy curtains do not block sounds or conversations.
The call system

- The call system lets the person signal for help.
- Always keep the call light within the person’s reach.
- An intercom system lets a nursing team member talk with the person from the nurses’ station.
  - When using an intercom, remember confidentiality.
- Persons with limited hand mobility may need a call light that is turned on by tapping it with a hand or fist.
Furniture and Equipment, cont'd.

- Some people cannot use call lights.
  - Check the care plan for special communication measures.
  - Check these persons often.
  - Make sure their needs are met.

- You must:
  - Keep the call light within the person’s reach.
  - Place the call light on the person’s strong side.
  - Remind the person to signal when help is needed.
  - Answer call lights promptly.
  - Answer bathroom and shower or tub room call lights at once.
The bathroom

- A toilet, sink, call system, and mirror are standard equipment in bathrooms.
- For safety, grab bars are by the toilet.
- Some bathrooms have raised toilet seats.
  - They make wheelchair transfers easier.
  - They are helpful for persons with joint problems.
- The bathroom call light flashes above the room door and at the nurses’ station.
  - The sound at the nurses’ station is different from the sound made by call lights in rooms.
Furniture and Equipment, cont'd.

- Closet and drawer space are provided.
  - OBRA requires closet space for each nursing center resident.
  - The space must have shelves and a clothes rack.
  - The person must have free access to the closet and its contents.
  - Items in closets and drawers are the person’s private property.

- Many agencies furnish rooms with other equipment.

- Residents may bring some furniture and other items from home.
Bedmaking

● Clean, dry, and wrinkle-free linens:
  ➢ Promote comfort
  ➢ Prevent skin breakdown and pressure ulcers

● To keep beds neat and clean:
  ➢ Straighten linens whenever loose or wrinkled and at bedtime.
  ➢ Check for and remove food and crumbs after meals.
  ➢ Check linens for dentures, eyeglasses, hearing aids, sharp objects, and other items.
  ➢ Change linens whenever they become wet, soiled, or damp.
  ➢ Follow Standard Precautions and the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard.
Types of beds

- A closed bed is not in use.
  - The bed is ready for a new patient or resident.
  - In nursing centers, closed beds are made for residents who are up during the day.

- An open bed is in use.
  - Top linens are fan-folded back so the person can get into bed.

- An occupied bed is made with the person in it.

- A surgical bed is made:
  - To transfer a person from a stretcher
  - For persons who arrive by ambulance
Bedmaking, cont'd.

● Linens

- Collect linens in the order you will use them.
- Place the clean linen on a clean surface.
- Remove dirty linen one piece at a time.
  - Roll each piece away from you.
  - Discard each piece into the laundry bag.
- Wet, damp, or soiled linens are changed right away.
Bedmaking, cont'd.

- **Drawsheets**
  - A drawsheet is a small sheet placed over the middle of the bottom sheet.
  - A cotton drawsheet helps keep the mattress and bottom linens clean.
  - A waterproof drawsheet is placed between the bottom sheet and the cotton drawsheet.
  - Many agencies use incontinence products, waterproof pads, or disposable bed protectors.
  - Cotton drawsheets are often used without waterproof drawsheets.
  - When cotton drawsheets are used as assist devices, do not tuck them in at the sides.
Making beds

The closed bed is made:
- After a person is discharged
- For a new patient or resident
- In nursing centers, for residents who are up for most or all of the day

The open bed is made for:
- Newly admitted persons arriving by wheelchair
- Persons who are getting ready for bed
- Persons who are out of bed for a short time
Bedmaking, cont'd.

- You make an occupied bed when the person stays in bed.
  - Keep the person in good alignment.
  - Follow restrictions or limits in the person’s movement or position.
  - Explain each procedure step to the person before it is done.

- The surgical bed (recovery bed or post-operative bed) is made for persons:
  - Returning to their rooms from surgery
  - Arriving at the agency by ambulance
  - Taken by stretcher to treatment or therapy areas
  - Using portable tubs
Assisting With Pain Relief

- Pain means to ache, hurt, or be sore.
- Pain is subjective.
  - You must rely on what the person says.
- The nurse uses the nursing process to promote comfort and relieve pain.
- Report the person’s complaints and your observations to the nurse.
Factors Affecting Pain

- Factors affecting pain
  - Past experience
  - Anxiety
  - Rest and sleep
  - Personal and family duties
  - The value or meaning of pain
  - Support from others
  - Culture
  - Illness
  - Age
The Back Massage

The back massage (back rub):

- Relaxes muscles and stimulates circulation
- Is given after the bath and with evening care
- Can be given after repositioning or helping the person to relax
- Lasts 3 to 5 minutes
The Back Massage, cont'd.

- Before giving the massage, observe the skin for:
  - Breaks in the skin
  - Bruises
  - Reddened areas
  - Other signs of skin breakdown

- Lotion reduces friction during the massage.

- During the massage:
  - Use firm strokes
  - Keep your hands in contact with the person’s skin
Promoting Sleep

- Sleep is a basic need.
  - The mind and body rest.
  - The body saves energy.
  - Body functions slow.
  - Vital signs are lower than when awake.
  - Tissue healing and repair occur.
  - Sleep lowers stress, tension, and anxiety.
  - It refreshes and renews the person.
  - The person regains energy and mental alertness.
Promoting Sleep, cont'd.

The nurse uses the nursing process to promote sleep.
  - Report your observations about how the person slept.

Factors affecting sleep
  - Illness (increases need for sleep)
  - Nutrition (can promote or prevent sleep)
  - Exercise (stimulant effect from release of substances into the bloodstream)
  - Environment
  - Drugs and other substances
  - Emotional problems
Promoting Sleep, cont'd.

- Sleep disorders involve repeated sleep problems.
- The amount and quality of sleep are affected.
- Insomnia is a chronic condition in which the person cannot sleep or stay asleep all night.
- Sleep deprivation means that the amount and quality of sleep are decreased.
- Sleep is interrupted.
- Sleepwalking is when the person leaves the bed and walks about.