

Chapter 10

Safety Needs

Lesson 10.1

- Define the key terms and key abbreviations in this chapter.
- Describe accident risk factors.
- Explain why you identify a person before giving care.
- Explain how to correctly identify a person.
- Describe the safety measures to prevent burns, poisoning, and suffocation.
- Identify the signs and causes of choking.
- Perform the procedures described in this chapter.

Safety

- Safety is a basic need.
- The care plan lists safety measures needed by the person.
- The goal is to prevent accidents and injuries without limiting the person's mobility and independence.

Accident Risk Factors

- You need to be aware of these risk factors:
 - Age
 - Awareness of surroundings
 - Agitated and aggressive behaviors
 - Vision loss
 - Hearing loss
 - Impaired smell and touch
 - Impaired mobility
 - Drugs

Identifying the Person

- Life and health are threatened if the wrong care is given.
- The person receives an identification (ID) bracelet when admitted to the agency.
 - You use the bracelet to identify the person before giving care.

Identifying the Person (Cont.)

- To identify the person:
 - Compare identifying information on the assignment sheet with that on the ID bracelet.
 - Use at least two identifiers.
 - An identifier cannot be the person's room or bed number.
 - Always follow agency policy.
 - Call the person by name when checking the ID bracelet.
 - This is a courtesy. Just calling the person by name is not enough to identify him or her.

Preventing Burns

- Common causes of burns include:
 - Smoking
 - Spilled hot liquids
 - Very hot water
 - Electrical devices

Preventing Burns (Cont.)

- These safety measures can prevent burns:
 - Be sure people smoke only in smoking areas.
 - Check the person's care plan about leaving smoking materials at the bedside.
 - Supervise the smoking of persons who cannot protect themselves.
 - Do not allow smoking in bed.
 - Do not allow smoking where oxygen is used or stored.
 - Be alert to ashes that may fall onto a person.
 - Keep hot food and liquids away from counter and table edges.
 - Do not pour hot liquids near a person.

Preventing Burns (Cont.)

- Turn on cold water first, then hot water.
- Turn off hot water first, then cold water.
- Measure bath or shower water temperature.
 - Check water temperature before a person gets into the tub or shower.
- Check for “hot spots” in bath water.
- Do not let the person use a heating pad or an electric blanket.
- Follow safety guidelines when applying heat and cold.

Preventing Suffocation

- Suffocation is when breathing stops from the lack of oxygen.
- Causes include:
 - Choking
 - Drowning
 - Inhaling gas or smoke
 - Strangulation
 - Electrical shock
 - Entrapment in the hospital bed system

Choking

- Choking or foreign-body airway obstruction (FBAO)
 - FBAO can lead to cardiac arrest.
 - The heart stops suddenly and without warning.
 - Choking often occurs during eating because of:
 - A large, poorly chewed piece of meat
 - Laughing and talking while eating
 - Excessive alcohol intake
 - Choking can occur in the unconscious person because of:
 - Aspiration of vomitus
 - The tongue falling back into the airway

Choking (Cont.)

- Foreign bodies can cause mild or severe airway obstruction.
- With mild airway obstruction:
 - Some air moves in and out of the lungs.
 - The person is conscious.
 - Usually the person can speak.
 - Often forceful coughing can remove the object.
 - The person's breathing may sound like wheezing between coughs.

Choking (Cont.)

- With severe airway obstruction:
 - The person has difficulty breathing.
 - The person may not be able to breathe, speak, or cough.
 - If the person can cough, the cough is of poor quality.
 - When the person tries to inhale, there is no noise or a high-pitched noise.
 - The person may appear pale and cyanotic.
 - The conscious person clutches at the throat.
 - The “universal sign of choking”
 - If the obstruction is not removed, the person will die.

Choking (Cont.)

- Abdominal thrusts are used to relieve severe airway obstruction.
 - Abdominal thrusts are quick, upward thrusts to the abdomen.
 - Abdominal thrusts are not used for very obese persons or pregnant women.
 - Chest thrusts are used.
 - Abdominal thrusts can be self-administered.

Lesson 10.2

- Explain how to prevent equipment accidents.
- Explain how to handle hazardous chemicals.
- Identify natural and human-made disasters.
- Describe fire prevention measures and oxygen safety.
- Explain what to do during a fire.

Lesson 10.2 (Cont.)

- Explain how to protect yourself from workplace violence.
- Describe your role in risk management.
- Perform the procedures described in this chapter.
- Explain how to promote PRIDE in the person, the family, and yourself.

Preventing Equipment Accidents

- All equipment is unsafe if:
 - Broken
 - Not used correctly
 - Not working properly
- You need to:
 - Inspect all equipment before use.
 - Check glass and plastic items for cracks, chips, and sharp or rough edges.
 - Follow the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard.

Preventing Equipment Accidents (Cont.)

- Electrical items must work properly and be in good repair.
 - Frayed cords and over-loaded electrical outlets can cause fires, burns, and electrical shocks.
 - Warning signs of a faulty electrical item include:
 - Shocks
 - Loss of power or a power outage
 - Dimming or flickering lights
 - Sparks
 - Sizzling or buzzing sounds
 - Burning odor
 - Loose plugs

Wheelchair and Stretcher Safety

- Wheelchair safety

- Make sure you can lock and unlock the wheel locks.
- Check for flat or loose tires.
- Make sure the wheel spokes are intact.
- Make sure the casters point forward.
- Position the person's feet on the footplates.
- Make sure the person's feet are on the footplates before moving the chair.
- Push the chair forward when transporting the person.
- Lock both wheels before you transfer a person to or from the wheelchair.

Wheelchair and Stretcher Safety (Cont.)

- Follow the care plan for keeping the wheels locked when not moving the wheelchair.
- Do not let the person stand on the footplates.
- Do not let footplates fall back onto a person's legs.
- Make sure the person has needed wheelchair accessories.
- Remove the armrests (if removable) when the person transfers to the bed, toilet, commode, tub, or car.
- Remove or swing front rigging out of the way for transfers.
- Clean the wheelchair according to agency policy.
- Ask a nurse or physical therapist to show you how to propel wheelchairs up steps and ramps and over curbs.
- Follow safety measures to prevent equipment accidents.

Wheelchair and Stretcher Safety (Cont.)

- Stretcher safety

- Ask two co-workers to help you transfer the person to or from the stretcher.
- Lock the stretcher wheels before the transfer.
- Fasten the safety straps when the person is properly positioned.
- Ask a co-worker to help with the transport.
- Raise the side rails. Keep them up during transport.
- Make sure the person's arms, hands, legs, and feet do not dangle through the side rail bars.
- Stand at the head of the stretcher. Your co-worker stands at the foot.
- Move the stretcher feet first.
- Do not leave the person alone.
- Follow safety measures to prevent equipment accidents.

Handling Hazardous Substances

- A hazardous substance is any chemical in the workplace that can cause harm.
 - Physical hazards can cause fires or explosions.
 - Health hazards are chemicals that can cause health problems.
 - Hazardous substances include:
 - Drugs used in cancer therapy
 - Anesthesia gases
 - Gases used to sterilize equipment
 - Oxygen
 - Disinfectants and cleaning agents
 - Radiation used for x-rays and cancer treatments
 - Mercury

Handling Hazardous Substances (Cont.)

- The manufacturer supplies hazardous substance warning labels.
 - Warning labels identify:
 - Physical and health hazards
 - Precaution measures
 - What personal protective equipment to wear
 - How to use the substance safely
 - Storage and disposal information
 - If a warning label is removed or damaged:
 - Do not use the substance.
 - Take the container to the nurse, and explain the problem.
 - Do not leave the container unattended.

Handling Hazardous Substances (Cont.)

- Every hazardous substance has a material safety data sheet (MSDS).
 - Check the MSDS before:
 - Using a hazardous substance
 - Cleaning up a leak or spill
 - Disposing of the substance
 - Tell the nurse about a leak or spill right away.
 - Do not leave a leak or spill unattended.

Disasters

- A disaster is a sudden catastrophic event. People are injured and killed. Property is destroyed.
 - Natural disasters
 - Human-made disasters
- Communities, fire and police departments, and health care agencies have disaster plans.
 - They include procedures to deal with people needing treatment and evacuation plans.

Bomb Threats

- Follow agency procedures if a bomb threat is made or if you find an item that looks or sounds strange.
 - Bomb threats can be sent by phone, mail, e-mail, messenger, or other means.
 - Or the person can leave a bomb in the agency.
 - If you see a stranger in the agency, tell the nurse at once.

Fire Safety

- Major causes of fire include:
 - Faulty electrical equipment and wiring
 - Over-loaded electrical circuits
 - Smoking
- Three things are needed for a fire:
 - A spark or flame
 - A material that will burn
 - Oxygen

Fire Safety (Cont.)

- Safety measures are needed where oxygen is used and stored:
 - NO SMOKING signs are placed on the door and near the bed.
 - The person and visitors are reminded not to smoke in the room.
 - Smoking materials, matches, and lighters are removed from the room.
 - Safety measures to prevent equipment accidents are followed.
 - Wool blankets and synthetic fabrics that cause static electricity are removed from the person's room.
 - The person wears a cotton gown or pajamas.
 - Materials that ignite easily are removed from the room.

Fire Procedures

- Know your agency's policies and procedures for fire emergencies.
- Know where to find fire alarms, fire extinguishers, and emergency exits.
- Remember the word RACE:
 - *R* is for rescue.
 - *A* is for alarm.
 - *C* is for confine.
 - *E* is for extinguish.
- Clear equipment from all exits.
- Do not use elevators if there is a fire.

Elopement

- Elopement is when a patient or resident leaves the agency without staff knowledge.
- The agency must:
 - Identify persons at risk for elopement.
 - Monitor and supervise persons at risk.
 - Address elopement in the person's care plan.
 - Have a plan to find a missing patient or resident.

Workplace Violence

- Workplace violence is violent acts directed toward persons at work or while on duty.
- Risk factors include:
 - People with weapons
 - Police holds
 - Acutely disturbed and violent persons seeking health care
 - Alcohol and drug abuse
 - Mentally ill persons who:
 - Do not take needed drugs
 - Do not have follow-up care
 - Are not in hospitals unless they are an immediate threat to themselves or others

Workplace Violence (Cont.)

- Pharmacies have drugs and are a target for robberies.
- Gang members and substance abusers are patients, residents, or visitors.
- Family and visitors may be upset, agitated, and disturbed.
- There may be long waits for emergency or other services.
- Workers are often alone with the person during care or transport to other areas.
- Staff levels may be low during meals, emergencies, and at night.
- Lighting may be poor in hallways, rooms, parking lots, and other areas.
- Workers may lack of training in recognizing and managing potentially violent situations.

Workplace Violence (Cont.)

- OSHA has guidelines for violence prevention programs.
 - Work-site hazards are identified.
 - Prevention measures are developed and followed.
 - The staff receives safety and health training.

Risk Management

- Risk management involves identifying and controlling risks and safety hazards affecting the agency.
 - The intent is to:
 - Protect everyone in the agency
 - Protect agency property from harm or danger
 - Protect the person's valuables
 - Prevent accidents and injuries

Risk Management (Cont.)

- Some agencies use color-coded wristbands.
 - To safely use color-coded wristbands:
 - Know the wristband colors used in your agency.
 - Check the care plan and your assignment sheet when you see a color-coded wristband. Ask the nurse if you have questions.
 - Do not confuse “social cause” bands with your agency’s color-coded wristbands.
 - Check for wristbands on persons transferred from another agency.
 - Tell the nurse if you think a person needs a color-coded wristband.

Risk Management (Cont.)

- The person's belongings must be kept safe.
 - A personal belongings list is completed.
 - A valuables envelope is used for money and jewelry.
 - Personal and electronic devices kept at the bedside are listed in the person's record.
 - The amount of money kept is noted in the person's record.
 - In nursing centers, clothing, shoes, and other items brought from home are labeled with the person's name.

Risk Management (Cont.)

- Reporting incidents

- An incident is any event that has harmed or could harm a patient, resident, visitor, or staff member.
 - Accidents involving patients, residents, visitors, or staff
 - Errors in care (giving the wrong care, giving care to the wrong person, or not giving care)
 - Broken or lost items owned by the person
 - Lost money or clothing
 - Hazardous substance incidents
 - Workplace violence
- Report accidents and errors at once.
- Complete an incident report as soon as possible.