

Topical Medications

NURSE DELEGATION: INSTRUCTIONS FOR GENERAL NURSING TASK

General delegated tasks are those tasks that the Nurse identifies as general in nature and once learned can be performed for all residents. The Caregiver to whom the task is delegated must demonstrate ability to perform the task as instructed by the Nurse. By signing this delegation form, the Caregiver being delegated agrees to perform the task as taught. The nurse will review Caregiver performance annually or as needed to assure continued competency in performance of the task.

General Task: Application of Topical Medications

Purpose

To apply medication to the skin

Supplies Needed

1. Medication (cream, powder, patch, ointment, lotion) as prescribed by physician
2. Soap and water, basin, washcloth, and towel
3. Disposable non-sterile gloves and plastic trash bag
4. Hand-washing solution

Procedures/Steps to Follow to Perform the Task

1. Explain the procedure to the resident.
2. Assemble equipment in a convenient work area.
3. Put on gloves.
4. Position and drape the resident as needed to apply topical medication.
5. Remove the old medication, and prepare the skin for the new medication in the following manner:
 - a. Wash the skin with soap and water. Pat dry.
6. Apply topical medication in the following manner:
 - a. **Cream, lotion, or ointment** – put approximately 1 to 2 teaspoons full (depending on size of area requiring medication) of medication in the palm of your hand, rub it between your hands to soften and warm it, and spread the medication over the skin, using even strokes: follow the direction of hair growth to avoid causing folliculitis; repeat the procedure, until the appropriate area of skin is completely covered; if a suspension-based lotion is being used, shake the container vigorously before applying a small amount of the lotion to a pad or gauze dressing; apply with even strokes to the skin; repeat the procedure until the appropriate area of the skin is completely covered.
 - b. **Patch** – remove the patch from its protective wrapper; hold the patch by the edge – do not touch the adhesive edges; immediately apply the patch, pressing it firmly with the palm of one hand for 10 to 15 seconds; as prescribed by the physician, remove the patch, and choose a different site to apply a new patch; record the date and the time of day, and initial the patch.
 - c. **Powder** – ensure that the skin surface is completely dry to minimize caking and crusting; completely spread apart the skin folds; lightly dust with a shake dispenser until the area is covered with a fine, thin layer of powder; powders wear off easily and may need more frequent application. If so, have obtain physician's order.
7. Assist the resident to a comfortable position, and help to dress him/her as needed.
8. Clean and replace equipment. Discard all disposable items including gloves in plastic trash bag.
9. Wash hands with hand-washing solution.



1. Medication will be administered with desired effect.

Potential Risks/Side Effects and Appropriate Actions to Deal with them (include what to observe for and report, what to do, and whom to contact)

1. Watch for any signs of rectal bleeding or vaginal drainage. If these are seen, notify the nurse.

Signature of CAREGIVER

Signature of Delegating Nurse

Delegation Competency
Review Date

[illegible]