Tips to Informal Caregivers
on Giving Personal Care

Infection and Contamination

Bodily wastes may carry infection and must be disposed of carefully to reduce the spread of infection. Wastes may include used paper tissues, sputum, dirty dressings, uneaten food, excrement and vomit. To dispose of solid wastes, use tongs or a spring clothespin. If these utensils are not available, carefully grasp the cleanest part of the material or pick it up with a paper towel. The soiled material should be put into a paper or plastic bag and disposed. In using a paper or plastic bag for disposal, turn down a cuff on the bag. The cuff protects the hands when closing the bag.

When a bag is not available, it is important to improvise one from a newspaper.

Liquid wastes should be poured into a container that has a lid and then poured into the toilet. The container holding the liquid should be washed with soap and water. Hands can carry germs and transmit infections and disease. When providing personal care, hand washing is important to protect both the caregiver and care-receiver.

The above statements are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. You should always consult with your physician about any health and lifestyle concerns or issues you may have.