Bathing
Equipment, Techniques and Tips

Problems with bathing may be caused by:
- Temperature of the water is too hot or too cold
- Temperature of the bathroom is too hot or too cold
- Forgetting that he/she needs to take a shower/bath
- Not enough privacy or embarrassed to have the caregiver help
- Not enough contrast between tub and floor can be confusing
- Fear of falling
- Being rushed or taking too long to take a bath/shower
- Inability to stay focused long enough to complete shower

Products that make the bathroom a safer and more accessible environment:
- Grab bars provide safety during entering and exiting the tub/shower and provide stability during bathing/showering. They should be anchored into the center of a wall stud to withstand the stress that will be placed on them. They must be long and wide enough to grasp easily.
- Bath/shower stools or seats and transfer benches prevent fatigue and falls. They must have rigid seat and backs. Legs should be rubber-tipped to prevent movement while seated.
- Hand-held showers can be used to direct water while remaining seated on a stool or in a tub.
- Non-slip and anti-slip bath mats prevents falls
- Childproof latches on cabinets containing medicine to prevent accidental poisoning

Physical aspects of bathing
- Put a towel over the person’s shoulders for warmth and/or if modesty is involved
- Do not use bath oils since they make the tub/shower slippery
- Use tear free/tangle free shampoo/bath gel
- Encourage person to wash self, assisting only when necessary
- Let person put on terry robe if drying with towel is a problem
Environmental aspects of bathing/grooming

• Have handrails installed
• Have a shower chair or bench installed
• Use a hand-held shower head
• Use a non-slip bath mat inside shower stall/bathtub
• Use a anti-slip bath mat outside shower stall/bathtub
• Avoid noise, which will echo in the bathroom
• Remove everything from the bathroom that could be a distraction
• Remove electrical appliances
• Make sure the temperature in bathroom is comfortable for bather
• Make sure there is adequate lighting
• Remove locks from bathroom door (if necessary)
• Make sure the hot and cold faucet handles are identified with red and blue colors
• Make sure the hot water is set for 120° F or lower.

Tips to increase or maintain cooperation with bathing/showering

• Know the person’s preference (bath or shower – morning or evening)
• A shower usually is easier and safer than a bath
• Do the bathing in the morning when the person is not tired
• Give bather washcloth so he/she can help while caregiver washes important parts
• Limit bath/shower to ones or twice a week and do sponge baths in between
• Use same routine every time
• Have everything ready before bathe/shower time
• Do not force a person to take a bath/shower
• When assisting, tell the person what part you are going to wash
• Give simple instructions as necessary
• Never rush a person
• Bathe person quickly to prevent chilling and agitation

Hygiene and bath wipes and No Rinse Shampoo:
Local pharmacy: if not in stock they will special order them at no extra cost.

www.drugstore.com go to the blank spot for the search and type in “no rinse shampoo” or “bathing”, scroll to bottom for comfort washcloths and Shield perineal care wipes
Websites for Assistive Devices for Bathing

**www.wingits.com** for special hardware for installation of grab bars, etc

http://ecom1.sammonspreston.com/  go to "personal care"

http://www.independentliving.com/home.asp  look under "health care" and "household"

**www.ableware.com**  go to "browse our catalog"

http://www.caregiverproducts.com  go to product catalog

**http://www.dynamic-living.com**  look under directory

http://www.ncmedical.com  go to functional solutions online catalog

http://www.walgreens.com  look under “Home Medical” then “Bathroom Safety”

http://www.homedepot.com  look under “Shop” then “Kitchen and Bath” then “Bath Safety”

**www.sears.com**  look under “Catalogues” find “Health and Wellness” then “Bathroom Safety”

**www.allegromedical.com**  go to Bathroom Assist and look under the various categories

http://www.betterhealthcareproducts.com  go to Bath Safety

http://www.homemedicalstore.com/  go to Bathroom Safety

http://www.medsupplyco.com  go to Home Care then to Bathroom Safety and look under the various categories

http://www.elderrestore.com  go to Bathroom Safety and look under various categories
Local Stores for Assistive Devices for Bathing

**Home Depot and Lowe’s**
- Handheld showers
- Grab bars
- Multi grip tub bar
- Shower chair and shower seat

**Eckerd and Walgreen’s**
- Handheld showers
- Long handle bath sponge
- Bath mats

Products available may vary from store to store. Lowe’s generally has store approved licensed and bonded contractors who can install the grab bars for you.