ST. FRANCIS 24/7 CALL CENTER: (321) 269-424

St. Francis REFLECTIONS® Hospice
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Oral Care

Maintaining oral hygiene is important for comfort and preventing infections, especially if the patient is unable to eat or drink much.

Supplies Needed:

- Soft toothbrush or sponge swabs
- Mild toothpaste
- Cup of water or mouthwash
- Towel
- Lip balm (optional)

Steps:

1. **Position the Patient:** If possible, have the patient sit up. If they cannot sit up, turn their head to the side.
2. **Wash Your Hands:** Clean your hands thoroughly before starting.
3. **Clean the Mouth:**
    a. Wet the toothbrush or sponge swab with water or mouthwash.
    b. Apply a small amount of mild toothpaste. Gently brush the patient's teeth, using circular motions, or use the sponge swab to clean the mouth and teeth. Pay attention to the gum line and the tongue. If the patient cannot handle toothpaste, just use water.
    c. For patients who cannot swallow or if there is a risk of aspiration, use a damp sponge swab instead of a toothbrush.
4. **Rinse and Clean:**
    a. If the patient can swish and spit, offer a cup of water or mouthwash to rinse the mouth, then have them spit into a basin or towel.
    b. If the patient cannot rinse and spit, use a moistened swab to wipe the inside of the mouth and remove any excess toothpaste.
5. **Dry the Mouth:** Gently pat the patient's mouth and lips dry with a towel.
6. **Moisturize the Lips:** Apply a small amount of lip balm or petroleum jelly to keep the lips moist and prevent cracking.

7. **Dispose and Clean Up:**
    a. Dispose of used swabs or toothbrushes. Clean and store any reusable items. Wash your hands thoroughly after completing oral care.

St. Francis Reflections is always available to assist with any questions or concerns 24/7

321-269-4240