ST. FRANCIS 24/7 CALL CENTER: (321) 269-4240

St. Francis REFLECTIONS® Hospice
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Personal Care and Hygiene

Tips for helping with Personal Care and Hygiene:

- **Oral Care:** Regular oral care can prevent infections, bad breath, and discomfort. For patients unable to brush their teeth, use oral swabs dipped in a non-alcoholic mouthwash or water. Apply lip balm to keep lips moist and prevent cracking.

- **Skin Care:** The skin of terminally ill patients is often fragile. Regular inspections can help identify pressure ulcers or other skin issues early. Use moisture barriers and gentle cleansers to prevent skin breakdown. Reposition bed-bound patients at least every two hours to prevent pressure sores. Elevate extremities as tolerated to provide pressure relief (elevate heels on pillow, use cushions in seats). Keep bedding clean, dry, and wrinkle-free.

- **Hair Care:** Simple tasks like combing or brushing hair can be soothing and provide a sense of normalcy. Use gentle shampoos, and if the patient is bed-bound, consider using a no-rinse shampoo cap. Hair care can be an opportunity for gentle touch, which can be comforting.

- **Nail Care:** Long nails can harbor bacteria and cause accidental scratches. Regular trimming and cleaning are essential use caution when trimming thick and calloused nails. Use nail files to smooth rough edges and avoid cutting too close to the skin. Diabetic patients should receive professional toe nail care to prevent injuries.

Remember to allow the patient to perform tasks independently as much as possible, offer choices and respect their preferences.

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

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