

E180 Administration of Enemas

An enema is the installation of a solution into the rectum and sigmoid colon. An enema is given to treat constipation or to cleanse the bowel for diagnostic procedures.

Purpose

Promote defecation.

Applies To

Registered Nurses

Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses

Other (*Identify*): _____

Equipment/Supplies

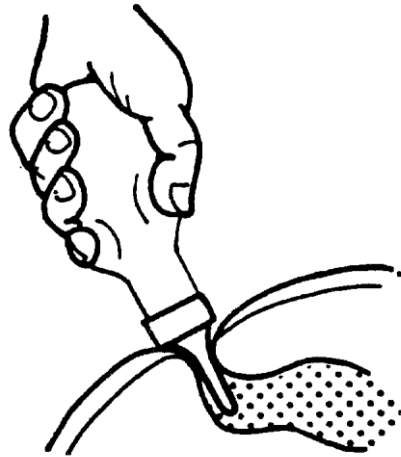
- Disposable gloves.
- Water-soluble lubricant.
- Waterproof, absorbent pads.
- Toilet paper.
- Bedpan, commode, or access to toilet.
- Wash basin.
- Washcloths, towels, and soap.
- Prepackaged enema container with rectal tip, or
Enema bag administration:
Enema container with tubing and clamp.
Appropriate size rectal tube: adults: 22 to 30 Fr., children: 12 to 18 Fr.
Volume of warmed solution as ordered.
Bath thermometer.

Types of Enemas:

- Tap water (hypotonic).
- Physiologic normal saline (safest for all including children).
- Hypertonic solution, i.e., Fleets (used for clients who cannot tolerate large volumes of fluid).
- Soap suds solution (use only castile pure soap) can be added to water or saline.
- Oil retention (small volume oil based solution that is absorbed by stool and softens for easier evacuation).
- Carminative (provides relief from gaseous distention) Mixture that contains magnesium, glycerin and water.

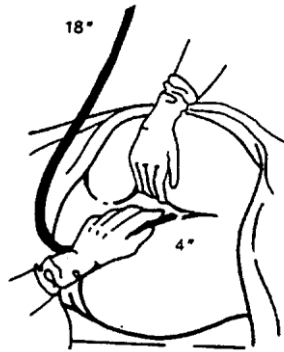
Procedure

1. Wash hands. Refer to the Hand Washing procedure.
2. Don clean gloves.
3. Position the client in the left-side lying position with knees bent. If the client has poor sphincter control, place in dorsal recumbent position on bedpan.
4. Place waterproof, absorbent pad under hips and buttocks.
5. Administration of prepackaged enema:
 - a. Remove cap from lubricated rectal tip. Add more lubricant as needed.
 - b. Insert entire rectal tip slowly into rectum. Instruct client to take slow, deep breaths:
 - For adults, insert 3 to 4 inches.
 - For children, insert 2 to 3 inches.
 - For infants, insert 1 to 1 1/2 inches.
 - c. Squeeze bottle until all the solution has been administered.



6. Administration of Enema with Bag:
 - a. Prepare enema solution. Use warm tap water or warm in basin of hot water. Check temperature using a bath thermometer or pour a small amount over the inner wrist.
 - b. Raise bag, open clamp, and allow solution to fill tubing. Close clamp.
 - c. Lubricate insertion tip with water-soluble lubricant.
 - d. Insert rectal tip slowly into rectum. Instruct client to take slow, deep breaths:
 - For adults, insert 3 to 4 inches.
 - For children, insert 2 to 3 inches.

- For infants, insert 1 to 1 1/2 inches.



- e. Holding tubing securely, open clamp and raise bag to the appropriate level:
 - For adults, 12 to 18 inches for high enema.
 - For children, 12 inches for low enema.
 - For infants, 3 inches.
 - f. If the client complains of cramping, lower the container and slow or stop flow. Continue to use stop-and-start procedure until all fluid is administered.
 - g. When all the fluid has been administered, clamp tubing.
7. Place toilet paper around tube at anus and slowly withdraw tube.
 8. Instruct the client to try to retain solution as long as possible (average 5 to 10 minutes), squeezing buttocks together.
 9. Assist the client onto bedpan, commode, or to toilet.
 10. After the client has expelled all of feces and solution, assist in washing buttocks.
 11. Reposition the client.
 12. Remove gloves and dispose of equipment according to the Agency Waste Disposal Policy.
 13. Wash hands. Refer to the Hand Washing procedure.

Documentation Guidelines

Document in the clinical record:

1. Color consistency and amount of stool and fluid passed Characteristics of stool.
2. Procedure performed with type of solution administered.
3. The client's tolerance of the procedure.

Pediatric Considerations

Children and infants usually do not receive prepackaged hypertonic enemas.

Related Procedures

None.

Policy History

Approval Date	11/1/2009
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