



Skills Modules 3.0 Checklist: Bowel Elimination

Administering Enemas

INSTRUCTIONS: Use the following checklist to evaluate competency in completing this skill. Select Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U) for each step and provide comments as needed.

*Document the relevant information (assessment findings, pharmacological and nonpharmacological interventions) in the client's medical record.

Beginning Steps

STEP	S	U	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
Verify the prescription for the enema and gather all necessary supplies.			
*Provide privacy as needed.			
*Introduce yourself to the client.			
*Verify client identification.			
*Determine whether the client has allergies.			
Provide client education.			

STEP	S	U	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
*Perform hand hygiene and put on appropriate PPE as indicated.			
Adjust bed height to a comfortable working level.			
Place client in a left side-lying position, with upper thigh flexed to chest, if appropriate for client condition and comfort. Drape client to allow visualization of rectal area. Place waterproof pad under client buttocks.			

Cleansing Enema

STEP	S	U	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
Warm enema solution, checking temperature with a thermometer or bring solution to room temperature or slightly higher.			
Add enema solution to bag and prime tubing.			
Elevate the bag of solution no higher than 18 inches (45 cm) above the level of the client's anus.			
Apply a generous amount of lubricate the end of the rectal tube about 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7cm).			
Tell client and then lift the client's buttock to expose the anus. Instruct the client to take several, slow deep breaths. Slowly and gently, begin to insert the rectal tube into the anus pointing toward the umbilicus, advancing 3 to 4 inches (7 to 10 cm) for an adult.			

STEP	S	U	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
While holding the tube continuously in place, begin to instill the solution over 5 to 10 minutes. NOTE: For return flow (flush) enema, instill 100 to 200 mL of solution and then lower enema bag below level of client's buttocks allowing the instilled solution to flow back into the solution container. Repeat this process several times to promote peristalsis and release of flatus.			
Assess for dizziness, lightheadedness, nausea, diaphoresis, and clammy skin, stopping the solution immediately if observed.			
If the client verbalizes the urge to defecate or is experiencing cramping, clamp the rectal tube and lower the bag. Encourage the client to pant or take small, fast breaths.			
Once the solution has been administered, clamp rectal tube and remove, wrapping in a paper towel.			

Retention or Prepackaged Small-Volume Enema

STEP	S	U	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
Remove cap from the commercially packaged enema bottle. Apply generous amount of lubricant to the end of the rectal about 2 to 3 inches (5 to 7 cm).			
Tell client and then lift the client's buttock to expose the anus. Instruct the client to take several, slow deep breaths. Slowly and gently, begin to insert the rectal tube into the anus pointing toward the umbilicus, advancing 3 to 4 inches (7 to 10 cm) for an adult.			
Holding the bottle in your hand, compress the container towards the rectal tip. Administer all the solution in the container by rolling the end of the container up towards the tip.			
Assess for dizziness, lightheadedness, nausea, diaphoresis, and clammy skin during administration. Discontinue procedure if these manifestations occur.			

STEP	S	U	EVALUATOR'S COMMENTS
Once the solution has been administered, keep the container collapsed, and slowly remove the rectal tube from the anus. Wrap tip in a paper towel.			
Encourage the client to retain the fluid for 5 to 10 minutes for small volume hypertonic enema, and a minimum of 30 minutes for an oil retention enema. Lower the bed height.			
When the client has the urge to defecate, assist the client to a sitting position on the bedpan or to the bedside commode or bathroom. Ensure the call bell is in reach or stay with the client.			
Instruct the client to avoid flushing the toilet or empty the commode before you observe the results of the enema.			
Provide perineal hygiene care and assist the client to perform hand hygiene.			
Return the client to a comfortable position, covering with bed linens.			
*Ensure that the client is in a safe position prior to leaving the room and has the call light within reach.			

References

- Lynn, P. (2019). *Taylor's clinical nursing skills* (5th ed.) Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer.
- Taylor, C., Lynn, P. and Bartlett, J. (2019). *Fundamentals of nursing* (9th ed.). Philadelphia: Wolters Kluwer.
- Perry, A., Potter, P., and Ostendorf, W. (2018) *Clinical nursing skills and techniques* (9th ed.). Maryland Heights, MO: Mosby.