

Department of Nursing

Policy and Procedure SGHC NP0392

Purpose

Relieve abdominal distention secondary to flatus.

Expected outcome

1. Abdomen is non-distended and soft.
2. Flatus has passed through rectal tube.
3. Patient states that distention and cramping are relieved.

Equipment

Rectal tube 22-36 French
Water soluble lubricant
Disposable gloves
Waterproof absorbent pad
Tape

Procedure

1. Identify the individual by at least two sources from the list below: (Preferably in the order indicated)
 - Ask the patient to state his/her name and compared to the name on the MAR, Medical Record, photo, diagnostic testing request or order sheet
 - Ask the patient to state his/her birth date and compare this with the addressograph information
 - Compare the individual photograph (found on the MAR and in the chart) with the patient
 - Compare the information on the patient's wristband with addressograph information
 - Ask staff familiar with the patient to verify his/her identification
2. Wash hands.
3. Provide privacy.
4. Raise bed to appropriate working height. Put side rail up on opposite side of bed.
5. Ask patient to turn onto left side and assume side lying or Sim's position. Assist patient as necessary. Keep patient draped except for rectal area.
6. Put on disposable gloves.
7. Place waterproof pad (chux) along buttocks.

8. Lubricate tip of rectal tube generously.
9. Take care to expose patient minimally. Gently separate buttocks, locate anus, and ask patient to take deep breath and slowly exhale through mouth.
10. Insert tip of rectal tube slowly, pointing it in direction of umbilicus, 15cm (6 inches).
11. After inserting tube, tape it to lower buttock.
12. Allow rectal tubing to remain in place for no longer than 30 minutes. Ensure bed is on lowest position.
13. Remove gloves and wash hands after leaving bedside.
14. Don gloves and remove rectal tube. Clean patient's rectal area. Note characteristics of drainage from rectal tube.
15. Return patient to comfortable position.
16. Dispose of used supplies, remove gloves, and wash hands.
17. Record amount, color, and consistency of expelled contents and response to procedure.

Approved by

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