NURSING CARE

Bowel Care

ADMINISTRATION OF RECTAL SUPPOSITORIES

AIMS

- To empty the bowel prior to surgery or pelvic and rectal examinations.
- To administer medications.
- To relieve constipation.

KEY POINTS

1. Invasive patient procedures require consent. Patients have the right to receive information on all aspects of their care in a manner that they can understand, as well as the right to refuse treatment. Document the patient’s decision in the medical record. Verbal consent for this procedure is acceptable.
2. Standard precautions shall be observed during the procedure.
3. Encourage self administration where possible.
4. Rectal medication shall not be administered to thrombocytopaenic or neutropaenic women.
5. The suppository should be administered at room temperature.

EQUIPMENT

- Disposable gloves
- Suppositories as ordered
- Lubricant
- Toilet tissue / bluey

PROCEDURE

1. Check the medication against the prescription and woman’s identity band, check the expiry date and any allergies. Explain the procedure and obtain verbal consent.
2. Assist the woman into the left lateral position with knees flexed. Ensure the woman’s dignity and privacy is maintained.
3. Perform hand hygiene and put on the disposable gloves.
4. Lubricate the medication before insertion as per manufacturer’s instructions.
5. Insert the rounded tip first, to approximately 4cm (about length of finger).
6. Insert against the rectal wall.
7. Advise the woman to remain lying in the left lateral position as this reduces the risk of spontaneous expulsion. Instruct the woman to retain the suppository for as long as possible. If urge to expel the suppository, the buttocks may be held together until spasm passes. When used for medication administration, allow 1 hour prior to bowel emptying for full absorption.
8. Ensure the call bell is within easy reach.
9. Remove and dispose of the gloves, perform hand hygiene.
10. Sign on the medication chart that the medication has been administered.

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All guidelines should be read in conjunction with the Disclaimer at the beginning of this manual
REFERENCES (STANDARDS)


National Standards – 1 Clinical Care is Guided by Current Best Practice
Legislation - Nil

Related Policies - Nil
Other related documents – Nil

RESPONSIBILITY

Policy Sponsor Nursing & Midwifery Director OGCCU
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Access the current version from the WNHS website

Do not keep printed versions of guidelines as currency of information cannot be guaranteed.