

home

YOUR AT-HOME CARE GUIDE

maintaining healthy skin

Northern Illinois Hospice is first in supporting you with the resources you need to ensure the best care. This is one in our series of tip sheets on how to improve safety and well-being in the home environment.

1. Check skin frequently for reddened areas

This can be done during a bath or linen change, or when the patient gets up to use the bathroom. Reddened areas commonly appear on the ears, elbows, tailbone and heels. If you see a reddened area or open wound, report it to your hospice nurse.

2. Keep skin clean and dry

Clean soiled skin with baby wipes or soap and water. Dry thoroughly with a towel and apply lotion or a skin barrier cream. Do this every time skin is soiled.

3. Keep linens clean, dry and wrinkle-free

Change linens as needed and every time they become soiled. If you have a hospital bed in the home and do not have sheets, ask your hospice nurse for a supply.

4. Turn bedridden patient from side to side

The patient can be turned from side to side while they are in bed. Turning can be done with pillows to take the pressure off the prone areas and support the body. The patient should be turned every two hours while awake. It also helps to place a “lift sheet” or “draw sheet” under them to help with turning. Your hospice nurse will show you how.

5. Special mattresses

Your hospice nurse will assess the need for a special mattress to be placed on the hospital bed. If a special mattress is required, always leave the mattress plugged in and the air pump turned on.

