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Foundations of NURSING

SECOND EDITION





SN Nanjunde Gowda

Foreword
BN Muninarayanappa

JAYPEE

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CHAPTER

3

Safety Guidelines in Nursing Unit

Goal: Safety of patients, staff, and visitors.

OBJECTIVES

Mastery of content in this chapter will enable the students to:

- Define the key terms
- Discuss environmental safety
- Discuss electrical safety
- Describe safety moving patient and equipment
- Discuss patients and visitors information.

SAFETY GUIDELINES IN NURSING UNIT

Safety and security is a main concern in nursing care. The responsibilities of nurses are to provide safe, secure environment and identify the harmful environment. Promoting safety and preventing injury are primary concerns in nursing. Many patients experience fall especially when they need to attend toilet. Any limitation in mobility is dangerous like, an elderly patient with unsteady gait is prone to falling and the hospital setting may increase the risk and the patients with paralysis or spinal cord injury need support such as walkers and wheel chairs, and they need careful guidance. Nurses must assess the risk for injury to support and to boost self-esteem of the patients.

Objectives

- To provide a safe and therapeutic environment in the nursing units.
- Nurses should be able to identify patient's problems related to the activity of maintaining a safe environment.
- Nurses should provide patients and visitors with information on safety in the hospital.
- Education to patients and visitors in their home and family setting.

ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY

Environment contributes to patient's sense of well-being. It is important for the nurse to ensure that the bedside environment is clean, safe, and pleasant. A nursing responsibility is ensuring that necessary equipment and items are in their proper place and function properly. On admission, the patient and the visitors will be oriented to the hospital environment, the equipment including the beds, call lights, and the layout of the room and unit. Arrange the equipment in the patient's room so that he/she is able to reach the needed articles on his bedside locker. The nurse is responsible to allocate the type of bed/crib needed in accordance to patient's age, needs, mental status, and capabilities.

Safe bedside unit includes the following:

- Patient call light should be functioning and always within reach.
- Bed positioned properly.
- Side rails and restrains safely used.
- Provide uncluttered walk space.
- Attention to ventilation, odors, room temperature, lighting, and noise.
- Odors may be decreased by promptly emptying bedpans, urinals, and emesis basins, not to dispose off soiled dressing in client's room or near the bed.

Lighting

Many patients find it difficult to sleep in the hospital as they are frequently disturbed for assessment or for treatment purposes, the nurse should be careful to reduce harsh lighting and noises whenever possible.

Beds

Patients spend most of their time on bed. The bed is an important part of the client's environment. Nursing responsibility includes ensuring a safe and comfortable bed, if the hospital has adjustable bed to raise or lower the head or foot, it is important that the nurse knows how to operate the bed and explain this to the patients.

Whenever the patient's condition indicates the need for upper or lower side rails, these should be used to prevent falls and the wheels on the beds should be locked to prevent the bed from slipping away.

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Ensuring patient's comfort is always a priority in nursing and to create a comfortable bed environment, the nurse should provide the following:

- Linen are clean and wrinkle free.
- See that the patients feel comfortable.
- Pressure points on patient are protected from rough sheet.

Sleep

Providing comfortable beds promotes rest and sleep. The bottom linen should be tight and clean, while the upper linen should allow freedom of movement and should not exert pressure.

A quiet and darkened room with privacy for relaxing is essential. In a strange environment where unfamiliar noises, such as people walking, entering or leaving the room and closing windows or doors are disturbing. Effort should be made to reduce disturbances, the temperature of the room, the ventilation, and the needs of an individual patient should be met as far as possible. The nurses should be aware of the patient's rituals and make every effort to meet them. One of the main problems for sleep is pain; depending on the cause, the severity of the pain and the discomfort, appropriate measures have to be taken.

Comfort and care should be considered when patient is sleeping. When care cannot be taken, nurses should explain that checking vital signs or specific nursing measure are more important than sleep.

Noises

Unfamiliar noises will be explained to the patient on an ongoing basis.

Nurses will help keep noises to a minimum by wearing shoes which do not cause excessive noises while walking, closing doors quietly, and by handling the equipment smoothly, avoiding dropping of any object, talking, and laughing loudly.

Exposure to Microorganisms

- Nurses will liaise with housekeeping for keeping the patient's room, bathroom, and nursing units clean and tidy.
- Washing and drying of hands should be practiced before and after contact with each patient.
- Isolation procedure should be utilized and explained to the patients and visitors. For the patients suffering from communicable diseases or for protective isolation. All policies and procedures on "isolation" should be followed.
- Visitors of isolated patients will be taught hand washing, the use of mask, gowns and gloves, and other precautions as necessary.
- Disposable dishes will be used for isolated patients.
- All patients discharged with continued need for isolation will be taught the techniques that the patient and the family need to follow at home.

Electrical Safety

- As new machines and equipment are introduced into the hospital, nurses will have to learn the potential dangers before using.
- Inspection on all the equipment, plugs, and outlets should be done daily and the suspected defects should be reported to the maintenance immediately and be repaired. A sign will be placed on the defected unit until repaired and will be removed after repair.
- Water and electricity should not come in contact, keep hands dry. Prevent dampness near switches, wiring, and appliances.
- Protect electrical cords, heat, oil, or abuse will damage the electrical insulation.
- Any electrical cord should always be placed high enough so as to prevent the tripping hazard.
- Nurses should make rounds with maintenance to inspect cords, plugs, switches, sockets, and outlets for damage. Problems should be alleviated immediately by maintenance.
- Defibrillation paddles should be checked in each shift when the cord carts are checked.
- Some patients are especially sensitive to electrical hazards. Nursing staff should be aware of the existence of patients with a particular sensitivity which may result from:
  - Debilitating medical condition
  - A major loss of skin resistance due to wet dressings.

Prevention of Electrical Hazards

When oxygen is administered, the following precautions shall be followed:

- Smoking is strictly prohibited in health institution. "No smoking-oxygen in use" signs shall be placed on the door of the patient's room.
- Flammable or combustible or vapors such as alcohol, oil, grease or other flammable materials should not be used while oxygen is being administered.
- Nylon, silk, rayon, and woolen clothing should not be used by patients when oxygen is being administered.
- Ether or any other explosive anesthetics should not be used.
- Oxygen administered should be humidified.

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- Nurses should understand and be constantly educated on the use of oxygen cylinders, regulators, humidifiers, catheters, inhalers, face masks, tents, and ventilators.
- Any new respiratory equipment should be explained to the nursing staff. In services on new equipment will include the use and the safety precautions as needed.
- Oxygen cylinders should be stored in a cool temperature away from the inflammable materials and where they are not likely to be knocked over.
- Any problems or questions about respiratory equipment should be immediately reported for inspection.

Incidents Involving Patients, Visitors, and Employees

- All nurses should be aware of correct procedure to follow, if a patient is injured in the hospital, the patient's attending physician will be called immediately to examine the patient. The incident will be relayed to the nursing supervisor and an incident report form will be filled out immediately and submitted to the appropriate person.
- All nurses should be aware of the correct procedure to follow if a visitor is injured in the hospital. The nurse will immediately take him/her to the accident and emergency department to be examined and an incident report form will be filled out immediately and submitted to the appropriate person.
- All nurses should be aware of the correct procedure to follow if he/she is injured while on duty, he/she will be examined by the appropriate person.

Safety in Moving Patients and Equipment

When moving heavy equipment, always have sufficient help to:

- Prevent injury to persons and equipment
- Push but do not pull heavy equipment to prevent injury to feet, legs, and back
- Open and secure swinging doors before proceeding
- Keep hands and fingers away from the edge of equipment to prevent injury
- When lifting patients and equipment, always seek help when needed.

Observe the following precautions:

- Keep spine vertical and straight, use leg muscles not back muscles.
- Stand close to the person/object being lifted with feet apart, for balance bend at knees to use leg muscles to lift.
- Use a safe, firm pressure when lifting, do not jerk.
- When lifting as a team, maintain constant level of the object by doing it gradually and gently.

Safety in Transporting Patients

When transporting stretchers, beds, carts, and other wheeled equipment, safety precaution must be followed as listed below:

- When assisting patients on a stretcher, bed or wheel chair, be sure the equipment is properly secured and brakes are set on the wheels.
- Any patient being transferred through stretcher must have side rails in upright position and safety straps fastened.
- First transport patient on a stretcher or bed feet.
- Push the vehicle from the end to avoid hand injury.
- Move slowly and always have clearance.
- When patients are being transported from one room to another by stretcher, they should be secured to a restraining belt and to keep their feet, hands, and arms under the covering blanket and on the stretcher. At doorways, stretchers and carts should be pulled through rather than pushed in blindly.

Safety from Insect

Flies, mosquito, and cockroaches should be kept away by proper spraying. Make use of the number of insecticides available or supplied from the institute.

Preventing Falls in the Hospital

Falls may be caused while shifting patients, it can be prevented by keeping floor dry to prevent slipping, securely holding stretcher and wheel chairs while transporting the patient.

TIPS TO ENSURE SAFETY OF PATIENTS

Preventing Falls in the Hospital

- Orient the patient on admission to their surroundings, and explain the call system
- Encourage the patient to use call bell and ensure call bell is within reach
- Place bedside tables and over bed tables near the bed or chairs so that patient do not over reach and lose their balance
- Assess the patient's ability to ambulate and provide assistance as required
- Instruct the patient to be careful while using toilet
- Encourage the patient to wear non-skidding footwear
- Keep the environment tidy
- Maintain clutter free area
- Ensure adequate lighting
- Attach side rails to the beds of confused, sedated, restless, and unconscious clients.

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Safety for Preventing Cross Infection in the Hospital

- Wash hands before and after each procedure.
- Ventilate the patient's room.
- Use damp dusting to prevent the raise of dust in the environment.
- Provide disinfectants for cleaning the floor.
- Keep the environment clean, e.g. bed locker, bed linen, over bed table, floor, etc.
- Cover the mattress and pillow with plastic cover so that it is easy to disinfect after a patient is discharged.
- Wear disposable gloves while handling body fluids and secretions, e.g. urine, stool, vomits, pus, etc.
- Complete all the cleaning activities, e.g. bed making, dusting, etc. at least one hour prior to the commencement of aseptic procedures, e.g. wound dressing, IV infusion, injection, etc.
- Wash hands before handling food.
- Serve the food hot in a covered container.
- Protect the kitchen and pantry from flies, insects, and cockroaches.
- Clean and disinfect bed pans, urinals, and sputum cups.
- Dispose all waste materials properly following hospital policy.
- Immunize all nurses, who are taking care of patients with infectious diseases.
- Cover all used sharp instruments and discard in an appropriate container.
- Regular health checkups for all personnel.
- Keep the toilets clean.
- Instruct people to cover the nose and mouth while sneezing and coughing to prevent droplet infection.

Patient's and Visitor's Information

- The nurse should give anticipating guidance and counseling to patients about the type of accidents likely to happen to their children at different ages.
- Children should be safeguarded from fire, gas stoves, oven, and hot water to prevent burns.
- Plastic bags and small objects that could occlude air passage should be kept away from children.
- Poisonous substances, household cleaning agents, and medications should be kept out of reach of the children, if a child has swallowed any poisonous substance or medication he/she should be taken to the hospital with the ingested substance or medication immediately.
- Children should not be left alone at home.
- Children should be supervised when riding a tricycle.
- Adults should be counseled to teach the children safety measures.
- The nurse should begin to assess the patient's home environment on admission and conduct patient teaching throughout the patient's stay.
- Prevent fire by proper use of gas stoves, kerosene lamps, and electrical appliances.
- Prevent fire by proper disposal of cigarette butts.
- Prevent accidents while traveling by not overloading the car and by following traffic rules.
- All chemicals should be kept in a safe place which will probably be in a glass.
- Sharp equipment (pins, needles, razor blades, sharp knives, electric carvers, and sharp gardening tools) should be kept in a locked or safe place. Sharp items should be disposed off in a safe manner.
- Safety should be considered while arranging lighting in houses and access areas, particularly where there are steps or stairs and when there are children or elderly people.
- Provision of stair guard and secure locks on doors and windows.
- Use of nonslip mat in the bathroom.

SAFETY PRECAUTION IN THE HOSPITAL

- Read the bulletin board in order to keep up with changes and improvement in the hospital policies and procedures.
- It is the responsibility of each employee to report unsafe condition to his supervisor.
- All safety measures for disoriented or emotionally disturbed patients should be utilized. Safety measures, both for patients and nurses, shall be put forth into practice while caring for these patients.
- Hospital personnel, visitors, and patients should be warned when doors are wet, and movable object has been kept in the passage.
- Always read warning signs such as "radiation precaution".

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Foundations of NURSING

Salient Features

- Some of the much-needed content is added to the existing content in the form of new chapter namely cultural diversity and sexuality
- Comprehensive coverage of INC syllabus for foundation of nursing
- Presentation of the content is comprehensive to adapt to the needs of Indian nursing faculty and students
- Content based on prescribed clinical learning requirements
- Content reviewed by many experts
- Nursing process explained to suit Indian context
- This comprehensive book encompasses all the procedures required
- The procedures are organized in logical and reader-friendly order
- All the procedures are updated based on current trends
- Nursing procedures are updated suitably for the present condition with reference to both national and international levels
- This book is guide to the students and handbook for the faculty.

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