

Chapter 10

Safety



Lesson 10.1

1. Summarize safety precautions to help prevent falls.
2. Relate specific safety considerations to the developmental age and needs of individuals across the lifespan.
3. Identify nursing interventions that are appropriate for individuals across the lifespan to ensure a safe environment.
4. Describe safe and appropriate methods for the application of safety reminder devices and nursing interventions when caring for patients.
5. Discuss nursing interventions that promote a restraint-free environment.

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Safe Environment

- This implies freedom from injury with a focus on preventing falls, electrical injuries, fires, burns, and poisoning
- The nurse must be aware of potential safety problems and must know how to report and respond when safety is threatened
- The responsibility for providing and maintaining a safe environment involves the patient, visitors, and members of the health care team
- Both protection and education are primary nursing responsibilities


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Falls




- The majority of patient falls occur during transfer either to a bedside commode or to a wheelchair
- High risk patients
 - A fall risk assessment is necessary upon admission or if there is a change in condition
- Gait belts



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Infants and Children


- Ensuring the safety of the environment of infants and children requires protection of the child and education of the parents
- Accidents involving children are largely preventable, but parents and caregivers need to be aware of specific dangers at each stage of growth and development



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Older Adults

- Changes associated with aging significantly affect the ability of older adults to protect themselves from injury
 - Unsteadiness in gait causes falls
 - Vision changes may affect the ability to see the height of stairs
 - Vertigo may occur due to disease and/or medications



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Safety Reminder Devices (SRDs)

- Numerous devices used to immobilize a patient or part of the patient's body
- Many facilities have adopted a restraint-free environment
- Long-term care setting is the permanent home for many residents and maintaining safety and dignity is important
- Disadvantages of SRD use

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Restraint-Free Environment

- Safety reminder devices (SRDs)
 - Focus should be to try alternative strategies before turning to use of SRDs (Box 10-3)
 - Used mostly for patient safety
 - May be used to safeguard the continuity of treatment (i.e., removing tube feedings or drainage tubes)
 - Family teaching is important in understanding reason for SRD use

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Lesson 10.2

6. Discuss safety concerns in the health care environment.
7. Cite the steps to be taken during a fire.
8. Describe nursing interventions to treat accidental poisoning.
9. Discuss the role of the nurse in disaster planning and active shooter situations.
10. Discuss terrorism.
11. Discuss high-risk syndromes of bioterrorism and the role of the nurse.

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Safety Hazards

- Latex sensitivity
- Electrical hazards
- Radiation
- Mercury spill



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Workplace Safety


- The hospital environment is a source of potential safety hazards for health care workers.
 - > Biologic, chemical, and physical hazards
 - > Lasers
 - > Blood and body fluids
 - > Contaminated needles
 - > Radiation
 - > Vaccine-preventable diseases

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Fire Safety


- Fires in health care facilities are often related to smoking in bed or faulty electrical equipment
- An established fire safety program is mandatory for all health care facilities
- Fire prevention includes good housekeeping, maintenance, and employee discipline
- All employees should know the telephone number and procedure for reporting a fire, as well as the location of the nearest firefighting equipment
- Health care workers must know their roles in the overall evacuation plan



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Accidental Poisoning

- Childhood poisoning is one of the major causes of death in children under 5 years of age
- The older adult is also at risk
 - Changes associated with aging interfere with the individual's ability to absorb or excrete drugs
 - The older adult may share drugs with friends
 - Changes in eyesight may lead to an accidental ingestion
- Prevention
- Poison Control Center



Disaster Planning

- Disaster situation
 - An uncontrolled, unexpected, psychologically shocking event
 - Earthquakes, hurricanes, floods, tornados, bombings, arson, riots, and hostage-taking
 - Health care facilities expected to receive victims and survivors and to assist rescuers
 - External or internal disaster
- Active shooter situation



Terrorism

- A new potential environmental health threat is the possibility of a terrorist attack
 - Biologic, chemical, or nuclear weapons



Bioterrorism

- This is the use of biologic agents to create fear and threat
- Health care facilities must be prepared to treat mass casualties from an attack
- Biologic attacks may be either overt (announced) or covert (unannounced)



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