

21

Clean, Safe, and Healthy Environments

1. Describe how housekeeping affects physical and psychological well-being

Providing a safe, clean, and orderly environment has always been an essential part of home health care. Illness and disability cause great stress. Clients feel better physically and psychologically and recover more quickly when their homes and families receive care and support. Infection and accidents are prevented. In addition, families who lack some knowledge about how to manage their homes can be taught valuable household management skills. These skills include sanitation, safety, personal hygiene, nutrition, meal planning, shopping, child care, food preparation, communication skills, and specific healthcare techniques. Home health aides can be role models for clients and their families by performing tasks efficiently and with a positive attitude.

2. List qualities needed to manage a home and describe general housekeeping guidelines

It takes efficiency, planning, knowledge, and skills to manage a household. An HHA needs to know how to use his time and energy well. Doing so allows him to focus on his primary responsibility—the personal care of the client.

The concept of person-centered care is important when caring for clients' homes, so sensitivity and respect are vital qualities as well. It is important that HHAs respect clients' customs,

beliefs, and feelings. It may be helpful for an HHA to imagine how he would feel if a stranger were handling his personal items and possessions. It is not easy for a person to find himself unable to care for his own home. It is important for home health workers to remember this and treat their clients with sensitivity and respect.

Sensitivity is also necessary when asking members of the household for help with housekeeping. Knowing when and how to appropriately ask for assistance is key. Some family members may be experiencing so much stress that they are unable to help at all.

An HHA's housekeeping assignments will vary. They may include simple cleaning and organizing of the client's room or general cleaning throughout the house. Some clients require management of all household functions. An HHA may be required to dust, straighten, vacuum, sweep, wash dishes, clean the bathroom and kitchen, and do laundry. The assignments will outline the specific duties to be performed (Fig. 21-1).

NUTRITION	Grocery Shopping				
	Wash Clothes				
	✓ Light Housekeeping - Bedroom/Bath room/Kitchen - Change Bed Linen				
	Client's room only				
OTHER	Equipment Care				
SIGNATURES/DATES					
Employee		Date		Patient/	
PATIENT/CLIENT NAME - Last, First, Middle Initial					

Fig. 21-1. An HHA's assignments will outline home maintenance tasks that he needs to perform.

Assignments may list specific days on which tasks should be performed, or the HHA may be allowed to make his own schedule. Flexibility is important and makes it easier to meet the client's and family's needs. If an HHA receives requests for services that are not listed in his assignments or if there are complaints about how tasks are done, he should contact his supervisor. Chapter 25 discusses in detail how to handle feedback and complaints.

Most agencies require that aides perform light housekeeping. This usually involves dusting, straightening, vacuuming or sweeping floors and floor coverings, cleaning bathrooms and the kitchen, and disposing of trash. Light housekeeping does not involve moving heavy furniture, washing windows, taking down drapes, cleaning the attic or basement, or mowing the lawn.

Guidelines: Housekeeping

- G** Invite family participation. Depending on their abilities and availability, clients and family members may be asked to participate in housekeeping tasks.
- G** Invite family and client input when you determine the tasks that need to be done and the methods used.
- G** Use cleaning materials and methods that are acceptable to and approved by clients and their families. Any efforts you make toward improving the home environment should coincide with the client's choices, lifestyle, and values.
- G** Be organized when performing tasks. Write out detailed daily and weekly schedules. Seek feedback from your supervisor and the client and family.
- G** Build some flexibility into the schedule to allow for changes in the client's condition, needs, appointments, or social activities.
- G** Organize cleaning materials and equipment by placing them in one closet. Place cleaning materials in a pail, a carrying bin with a handle, a laundry basket, or a shopping bag (Fig. 21-2). Do not leave cleaning equipment around the home.
- G** Familiarize yourself with the cleaning materials and equipment. Read the labels and instruction booklets. Ask the client, family members, or your supervisor how the equipment works if you are unfamiliar with it.
- G** Maintain a safe environment as well as a clean one. Do not wax floors if your client is unsteady. Mop up spills immediately.
- G** Use housekeeping procedures and methods that promote health. Many diseases may be transmitted through improper food handling, dishwashing, and handwashing, and unclean bathrooms and kitchens. Always wash from clean areas to dirty areas, so you do not spread dirt into areas that have already been washed.
- G** Observe the home environment for signs of infestation by roaches, rats, mice, lice, and



Fig. 21-2. Keep cleaning materials and equipment organized.

fleas. These insects and animals are common carriers of disease. Controlling them is vital to family health and cleanliness.

- G** Use proper body mechanics when performing activities to help prevent injury. Housecleaning can require a great deal of bending, standing, stooping, and lifting. Watch your posture. Kneel instead of stooping for long periods.
- G** Clean up and straighten up after every activity. Clean spills as soon as they occur. Spills that have dried are difficult to remove later.
- G** Carry paper and a small pencil to make note of items that must be purchased or replaced. Maintain a shopping list on a refrigerator door or other convenient location, and encourage family members to use the list.
- G** Use your time wisely and efficiently. For example, prepare food while a load of wash is being done.

3. Describe cleaning products and equipment

Five basic types of home cleaning products are available:

1. All-purpose cleaning agents can be used for many purposes and on several types of surfaces. Surfaces include countertops, walls, floors, and baseboards.
2. Soaps and detergents are used for bathing, laundering, and dishwashing.
3. Abrasive cleansers are used mostly to scour hard-to-clean surfaces.
4. Specialty cleaners are used to clean special surfaces, such as glass, metal, or ovens.
5. Nontoxic, environmentally safe cleaning products are made without toxic chemicals. They may be fruit- or vegetable-based. Some of these products are even made at home with basic ingredients, such as baking soda, vinegar, castile soap, and water (Fig. 21-3).



Fig. 21-3. Nontoxic cleaning products include ones made with baking soda, vinegar, and castile soap, among other items.

All cleaning products must be used properly. Many cleaning products contain chemicals that can be irritating and can even cause burns. Some chemicals are poisonous when swallowed.

Guidelines: Using Household Cleaning Products

- G** Read and follow the directions on the label of every product you use. Cleaning products can harm the materials you are trying to clean.
- G** Wash your hands and don gloves before using cleaning products.
- G** Do not mix cleaning products. This can cause a dangerous chemical reaction that may harm you or others. In particular, **never mix bleach or products containing bleach with ammonia. The fumes are toxic and can be fatal.**
- G** Open windows when cleaning to provide fresh air. Some cleaning products have fumes that are unpleasant or even harmful if you are exposed to them for a long time.
- G** Do not leave cleaning products on surfaces longer than the recommended time. Do not scrub too hard on soft surfaces.
- G** Household bleach, diluted with four parts water, makes a strong disinfectant solution to clean bathroom surfaces. Diluted with nine parts water and stored in a labeled spray bottle, bleach makes a milder disinfectant to use on kitchen counters. Do not spill or splash undiluted bleach or bleach solutions on carpets, clothing, or other surfaces that might be discolored.

Cleaning supplies generally include two types of tools:

1. Wet mops, pails, toilet brushes, and sponges are tools for softening and removing soil that has dried and hardened on washable surfaces.
2. A vacuum cleaner and attachments, carpet sweeper, dust mop, dust cloths, broom, and brush and dustpan are for removing dry dirt and dust.

HHAs must be careful with equipment. Replacements can be expensive. HHAs should be familiar with how to use each piece of equipment and should keep it clean and in its proper place. Brushes and bags of vacuum cleaners should be checked often.

Environmentally Friendly Care

Cleaning Solution Ideas

Several types of environmentally safe, nontoxic cleaning solutions can be prepared from common household items.

- Baking soda can be used instead of scouring powder. Baking soda can also be diluted with warm water to make a solution that will eliminate odors when used to clean surfaces.
- White vinegar can be used to remove lime or other mineral deposits on sinks, toilets, or chrome fixtures. It cuts grease and removes mildew and odors. White vinegar diluted with water can be used instead of glass cleaner. Mix solution using one part white vinegar to three parts water (1:3). This solution can also be used to clean sealed wood and tile floors.
- Lemon juice, by itself or mixed with water or other ingredients, can be used to eliminate odors, clean and disinfect surfaces, and cut grease.
- Borax, or sodium borate, is a white powder that dissolves in water. Borax can be used to clean, eliminate odors, and disinfect. It is also used as an alternative insecticide. While borax is natural and is not an environmental toxin, it should not be swallowed, and it can cause skin irritation. Use care when handling borax; do not use it around food. Keep it out of reach of children and clients who are confused.

4. Describe proper cleaning methods for living areas, kitchens, bathrooms, and storage areas

Not all housekeeping tasks must be performed daily. Some tasks may be done weekly. Others only need to be done once a month or seasonally. The special tasks can be spaced out. Each cleaning job should be done properly and as efficiently as possible. Housework can be made safer by eliminating unnecessary reaching, bending, and stooping. With a little experimentation, an HHA can find the most efficient way to do a job. Cleaning can be done when a client is resting, sleeping, or doing another activity. Care of the client is the HHA's primary responsibility. However, she must not neglect housekeeping.

Guidelines: Straightening and Cleaning Living Areas

- G** Clear up clutter and put objects in their correct places.
- G** Pick up newspapers, magazines, and toys as needed.
- G** Empty wastebaskets and ashtrays daily.
- G** Make the beds each day.
- G** Keep essential and frequently used items, such as eyeglasses, tissues, a wastebasket, phone, newspaper, magazines, laptop, tablet, and books, within reach. Organize them on an accessible table, magazine rack, or hanging organizer (Fig. 21-4).
- G** Dust once a week or when necessary. If your client has allergies, you may need to dust daily.
- G** Vacuum floors and rugs once a week or more often if indicated. When vacuuming rugs, use long strokes and go over each area repeatedly. If the home does not have a vacuum, use a broom to sweep the floors and rugs. Take care not to raise much dust.

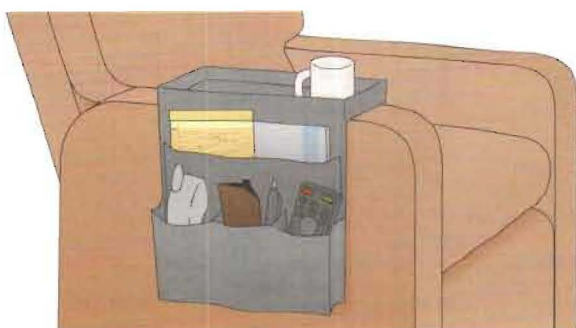


Fig. 21-4. A hanging organizer can help reduce clutter while keeping important items handy.

- G** Floors covered with vinyl, ceramic tile, and linoleum may be washed. Some wood floors may not. Some floor coverings should be cleaned with water only. Check with the client or family before you begin. After removing loose dirt or crumbs with a vacuum or broom, wash floors with a cloth or mop dipped in warm, sudsy water (or proper cleaning solution). Dry the floor after you have washed it or close off the area for the time it takes for the floor to dry (Fig. 21-5). Wet or waxed floors are slippery and are frequent causes of falls in the home.



Fig. 21-5. Close off the area for the time it takes for the floor to dry.

Handling food on contaminated surfaces, improper dishwashing, and contaminated food storage areas may transmit many diseases. Roaches, rats, and mice may cause disease and allergy by contaminating food with their saliva or through their droppings. Pest control is vital to health and cleanliness. An HHA should always report pest control problems to her supervisor.

Guidelines: Cleaning the Kitchen

- G** Clean the kitchen after every use. Ask family members to do the same. Do not wait until the end of the day to clean up. Daily kitchen cleaning tasks include washing dishes, wiping surfaces, taking out garbage, and storing leftover food. Weekly tasks include cleaning the refrigerator and washing the floor. Cleaning cabinets, drawers, and other storage areas is usually done a few times a year.
- G** Wash dishes in hot, soapy water using liquid dish detergent. Rinse them in hot water. When working with clients who have an infectious disease, use boiling water for rinsing and add a tablespoon of chlorine bleach to the soapy water. The combination of heat and chlorine will kill **pathogens** (PATH-o-jens), or harmful microorganisms.
- G** Wash glasses and cups first, then silverware, plates, and bowls. Pots and pans are washed last. Rinse with hot water and dry on a rack. Air drying dishes is more sanitary than drying with a dish towel.
- G** If the house has a dishwasher, learn how to correctly load and start it. Dishwashers save time. They may also sterilize dishes because of the high temperature used in washing and drying. Scrape food from plates and rinse them before placing them in the dishwasher. Empty cups and glasses. Do not place dishes, cups, and flatware too close together. This keeps them from being washed thoroughly.

Place dishes, cups, and glasses so that their eating or drinking surfaces are facing the water source. Use only a dishwasher detergent. Fill the well with the amount recommended on the label.

- G** Do not wash the following items in the dishwasher: electrical appliances, certain plastic materials, wooden pieces or utensils, hand-painted or antique dishes, delicate china, crystal, cast iron, some pots and pans, and sharp or carbon steel knives.
- G** Clean the outside of the stove, the trays, and burners with hot, sudsy water or an all-purpose cleaner, and rinse. Ovens should be cleaned according to manufacturer's recommendations. Be sure to follow the directions. Do not spray the light bulb inside the oven with cleanser, or it may break. If the oven has a broiler pan, soak it immediately after use.
- G** The refrigerator should be completely cleaned once a week. However, you should wipe it out more frequently (Fig. 21-6). Wipe the freezer surface as well. Most freezers have a self-defrost or auto-defrost feature and only need to be wiped clean regularly.



Fig. 21-6. The refrigerator should be completely cleaned once a week, but you should wipe it out more frequently.

- G** Mix two tablespoons of baking soda in one quart of warm water. Wipe the inside walls of the refrigerator and freezer. Baking soda will remove odors. Wash the shelves and trays with warm, soapy water.

- G** Clean countertops, tables, and the stove each time they are used. Clean cabinet and drawer fronts and the refrigerator once a week. If a cutting board or other surface has been used to cut fresh meat, scrub the surface thoroughly with hot, soapy water. Rinse well.
- G** An all-purpose cleaner or a vinegar or lemon juice solution may be needed to remove grease and cooked foods that have spilled or splashed on surfaces. Clean the sink with baking soda or a scouring powder or cream.
- G** Never place food on soiled work or storage areas or in unclean containers. Keep food covered. Close lids of cartons and cover food storage containers to prevent contamination or infestation by insects and rodents. Place leftovers in covered containers and store them in the refrigerator immediately. Use them within two to three days.
- G** Vacuum, sweep, or dry mop the floor daily. Damp mop uncarpeted floors at least once a week, using hot water and a floor cleaner or vinegar solution. Rinse the floor if the label recommends it. Dry the floor or close off the area until the floor dries to prevent accidents.
- G** Dispose of garbage daily. To prevent odor and discourage insects and rodents, rinse out tin cans and bottles before placing them in the recycling bin or trash container. Follow the recycling procedures for your client's community. Periodically wash wastebaskets and trash cans with hot, soapy water.
- G** Store all cleaning materials away from food, food preparation utensils, and food preparation areas. Keep them out of reach of children and clients who are confused.

Environmentally Friendly Care

Recycling

Recycling is the process of taking materials that would have been considered waste and turning them into new products. Recycling programs help reduce waste and the need for landfills. Recycling helps

prevent pollution and saves energy, among many other benefits. Some clients will have recycling bins in their homes. Certain plastics, glass, steel, aluminum, and paper products are commonly placed in recycling bins. Other items, such as electronics and batteries, usually need to be recycled separately. The HHA should know which materials can be recycled and how to recycle in her client's community. Recyclable items may need to be rinsed and sorted into separate bins. If in doubt, the HHA should ask the client or the supervisor.

A clean, organized, and odor-free bathroom is an important part of improving a family's hygiene and safety. Because it is moist and warm, the bathroom is a reservoir for the growth of microorganisms, mold, and mildew.

Guidelines: Cleaning the Bathroom

- G** Involve the entire family in keeping the bathroom clean (Fig. 21-7). Remember to wash from clean areas to dirty areas.



Fig. 21-7. Clients and family members can help by doing such things as wiping out the shower after each use.

- G** Flush the toilet each time it is used.
- G** Clean toothbrushes and toothbrush holders.
- G** Scrub the tub and shower after use.
- G** Remove hair from drain strainers.
- G** Hang up all used towels to dry.
- G** Put away toiletries.

- G** Rinse the sink after brushing teeth, shaving, and washing.
- G** Place soiled towels in the laundry hamper after they are dry.

The bathroom is the location of many home accidents. All bathroom rugs should be non-skid, and puddles of water should be wiped up immediately. If a client has difficulty moving about in the bathroom safely and grab bars are not present, the HHA should report this to his supervisor.

Cleaning a bathroom

Equipment: approved disinfectant (a cleaning product that kills germs), scouring powder or baking soda, rags or disposable wipes, toilet brush, floor cleaner or vinegar solution, paper towels, disposable or rubber gloves

1. Put on gloves.
2. Using the disinfectant and rag/wipe, wipe all surfaces and rinse as needed. Be sure to clean the sides, walls, and curtain or door of the shower or tub; the towel racks; holders for toilet paper, toothbrushes, and soap; and window sills.
3. Use a different rag/wipe to wipe the outside of the toilet bowl, seat, and lid. As a general cleaning rule, start with the cleanest surface first, then move to dirtier areas.
4. Use a different rag/wipe to clean the bathtub, shower stall, and sink. Use scouring powder or baking soda for tile and porcelain, and disinfectant or vinegar solution on other surfaces. Remember that scouring powder can scratch. Check with the client or a family member before using it. Be sure to scrub the sides, edges, and bottoms of all these areas. Clean faucets and scrub around their bases.
5. Scrub the inside of the toilet bowl with a brush and scouring powder. Be sure to scrub under the rim. If you use a second, stronger toilet cleaner, flush the first cleaning product

down the drain to avoid possible chemical reactions. Wash the toilet brush with a disinfectant solution. Store it in holder after letting it air dry.

6. Vacuum or sweep the floor first, then wash if the floor is tile or linoleum. Use an all-purpose floor cleaner or vinegar solution in hot water. Wash the floor with a cloth or mop, taking special care to clean the areas at the base of the toilet and sink. Do not leave the floor wet. Dry it carefully to avoid accidents.
7. Clean the mirror and any glass or chrome surfaces using glass cleaner or vinegar solution and paper towels or clean rags.
8. Launder wet, soiled rags, or discard wipes. Empty the waste can into a garbage bag and dispose of the waste. Replace toilet paper and facial tissue when needed. Open the bathroom window for a short time, if possible, to air the room out. Once a week, wash out waste can and laundry hamper. Launder the bath mats and rugs.
9. Store supplies.
10. Remove and discard gloves.
11. Wash your hands.
12. Document the cleaning.

Cleaning and organizing storage areas will contribute to the order and organization of the home.

Guidelines: Cleaning and Organizing Storage Areas

- G** Every item in the home should have a storage place that is convenient for use. That means storage places should be as close as possible to where stored items are used (Fig. 21-8). For example, bath towels should be stored in or near the bathroom. Frequently used pots and pans and cooking utensils should be

near the stove. Less frequently used items, such as popcorn poppers, should be stored in the less accessible storage places.



Fig. 21-8. Store items near where they will be used.

- G** Items that are frequently used should be easily seen and reached. Items that are used together should be stored near each other. Arrange food on shelves according to category to save time in searching for items. Dangerous materials such as cleaning products should be stored out of reach of children and adults who are confused.
- G** Some storage areas only need to be cleaned occasionally. Remove the stored items and any shelf or drawer liners. Wipe the shelves and drawers with a damp cloth and all-purpose cleaner or vinegar solution. Replace the liners or wipe them if they can be cleaned. Clean food storage areas and other storage areas that are used frequently more often.
- G** Do not change the client's or the family's storage arrangements without talking to them. If you think changes are needed, discuss your ideas with the family.

5. Describe how to prepare a cleaning schedule

Most housecleaning tasks should be done regularly, whether immediately, daily, weekly, monthly, or less often. The HHA will need to take into account the care plan, his assignments,

how much help is needed, and how much time he has in a particular home to prepare a cleaning schedule. The HHA may not always follow the schedule exactly, but it will guide his work and help him get essential cleaning done. Establishing a schedule for cleaning can also help the family keep a housekeeping routine after home care has ended. A sample cleaning schedule follows. In this scenario, the client is unable to assist with household tasks. Her daughter comes several times a week, but no family members live with the client.

Cleaning Schedule for Mrs. Hartman

Immediately: Wipe counters, wash dishes, store food, clean spills, put away supplies.

Daily: Straighten up: make bed, sort mail, remove clutter, empty trash, etc. Clean bathroom. (One hour)

Weekly: Wash kitchen floors, wipe refrigerator, scrub sink, vacuum other floors, dust all surfaces, scrub bathtub. (Two to three hours)

Monthly: Clean out refrigerator and freezer (defrost freezer if needed). (One hour)

Less often: Clean oven when needed. (One hour)

Cleaning schedules will be different for each client. The HHA should be flexible. Client care is the first priority, which means the schedule may need to be adapted after it is made.

6. List special housekeeping procedures to use when infection is present

Home health aides must follow Standard Precautions with every client. This is true because it is impossible to always know when infection is present (see Chapter 5). However, when a client has a known infectious disease such as influenza, or one that weakens the immune system such as cancer, the HHA should take special precautions in housecleaning:

- Use disinfectant when cleaning countertops and surfaces in the kitchen and bathroom.

- Clean the client's bathroom daily. Have other family members use a different bathroom if possible.
- Use separate dishes and utensils for the client.
- Wash dishes and utensils in the dishwasher or wash dishes in hot, soapy water with bleach. Rinse in boiling water and allow to air dry.
- Disinfect any surfaces that come into contact with body fluids, such as bedpans, urinals, and toilets.
- Frequently remove trash containing used tissues.
- Keep any specimens of urine, stool, or sputum in double bags and away from food and food preparation areas.

7. Explain how to do laundry and care for clothes

Hand or machine washing may be part of an HHA's assignments. Clean clothes, bed linens, and towels are important for hygiene and comfort.

Laundry Products and Equipment: Washing laundry requires laundry detergent, a washing machine or a basin for handwashing clothes, and a dryer or a clothesline and pins. The instructions for using washing machines are usually located on the inside of the machine.

In general, it is best to use an all-purpose detergent. Some delicate fabrics, underwear, or stockings may require a special detergent. Some clients may prefer a nondetergent soap for use on baby clothes and diapers. Bleach, color brighteners, stain removers, and fabric softeners may also be used. An HHA should ask the client and family about their preferences for laundry products.

Pretreating: Pretreating means giving special treatment to items that have heavy soil, spots,

and stains before washing them. Spots and stains should be treated immediately. The sooner they are treated, the easier they are to remove. Some oily stains harden with age and cannot be removed. Washing and ironing may set some stains, making them difficult or impossible to remove. It helps to identify the source of the stain and treat it according to a stain guide for the pretreating solution.

Bleach: Bleach is used with detergent. However, bleach cannot be used on all fabrics. The HHA should be familiar with the type of bleach and the fabric that is being washed. Two types of bleach are used in laundry: chlorine bleach and nonchlorine (called *oxygen* or *all-fabric*) bleach. Both types of bleach should be used with caution, and the instructions on the container should be read carefully.

Chlorine bleaches can come in liquid or powdered form. Liquid chlorine bleach is an excellent stain remover. It whitens clothing. However, it can be very damaging to fabric. Bleach should always be diluted in water. Water is added to the washing machine first, then the bleach is stirred in before the clothing is placed in the water. Liquid chlorine bleach must never be used on silk, spandex, wool, or any item that contains these fibers. Spraying or splashing liquid chlorine bleach can remove color or damage fabric, so it should be avoided. Powdered chlorine bleach is more gentle than liquid, but it can also damage clothing. Either type of chlorine bleach is also an excellent disinfectant. Nonchlorine bleach is used on washable fabrics, but it is most effective in hot water.

Water Temperature: The HHA should read the washing instructions for all materials and garments (Fig. 21-9). Warm water is the safest temperature for most garments. However, some must be washed in cold to prevent shrinking or colors from fading. Hot water is generally used for towels, bed linens, and white or colorfast cottons. Warm is usually used for permanent press, knit, synthetic, sheer, lace, acetate, fabric blends,

and rayons. Cold water is used for brightly colored fabrics or fabrics that are not colorfast.



Fig. 21-9. A care tag gives washing and drying instructions. It can be found on most clothing.

Washing Action or Cycle: Cottons, linens, rayons, sturdy permanent press, knits, synthetics, blends, and most other items use the normal washer setting. The slow or gentle setting should be used for washable woolens, old quilts, curtains, and delicate or fragile items.

Drying Clothes: Settings on the dryer vary according to the model. The more delicate a fabric, the lower the drying temperature and the shorter the time in the dryer. Heavy items such as towels need higher temperature settings and a longer time in the dryer. The lint filter should be cleaned each time the dryer is used. If a client does not have a clothes dryer, the HHA can hang clothes on a clothesline using clothespins or on a drying rack.

Folding: Removing all clothes from the dryer immediately will reduce wrinkling. Clothes can then be folded neatly or placed on hangers. If clothes need to be ironed, they may be set aside; other clothes should be put away in drawers or in a closet.

Ironing: Special care is needed when ironing. Most care labels will indicate the best ironing temperature. If no temperature is indicated, it is best to use the lowest temperature on the iron to avoid damaging the fabric. Pile fabrics like velvet and corduroy will keep their texture better if ironed on the wrong side over a towel. Dark fabrics, silks, acetates, rayons, linens, and some

wools must be pressed on the wrong side to prevent them from becoming shiny. A pressing cloth can help protect the fabric.

Ironing fabrics lengthwise will prevent stretching. Collars, cuffs, and garment facings should be ironed first, followed by sleeves, then the front and back. As soon as clothes are ironed, they should be placed on hangers or folded. All hooks and buttons should be fastened and zippers closed. Clothes must be completely dry before they are put away.

Doing the laundry

1. Sort clothes carefully. Make separate piles of whites and colors. Check clothing labels for special washing instructions. Do not wash anything labeled Dry Clean Only. If hand washing is recommended, do not wash in the machine.
2. As you sort laundry, check pockets and remove tissues, money, pens, and other items. Remove belts with buckles, trims, and non-washable ornaments. Close zippers, buttons, and other fasteners. Check garments for stains and areas of heavy soil.
3. Pretreat spots and stains before washing. A small amount of liquid detergent or dry detergent dissolved in water can be worked in with an old toothbrush (Fig. 21-10). Pretreat or soak clothing as soon as possible for best results. If you know something is stained, do not let it sit in the laundry hamper all week until you do the laundry.



Fig. 21-10. Pretreating helps remove spots, stains, and areas that are heavily soiled.

4. Use the correct water temperature: hot for whites, cold or warm for colors, and cold for delicate fabrics.
5. Use the appropriate laundry product(s). Follow the washing instructions on the container.
6. Follow written instructions or client or family instructions for using the washer. Use the correct washing cycle for the load you are laundering.
7. Dry clothes completely either in a dryer or on a clothesline. If using a dryer, follow the drying instructions on clothing labels or the client's preferences. Some fabrics require cooler temperatures.
8. Handwash items in warm or cool water, depending on the fabric and instructions. Use a mild detergent or special handwashing liquid. Line dry, place on a drying rack, or lay items flat on towels to preserve the shape of the garment.
9. Fold or hang clean laundry and sort into categories. Store in drawers or closets.

8. List special laundry precautions to use when infection is present

When a client has a known infectious disease, the HHA must take these special precautions when handling laundry:

Guidelines: Handling Laundry for Clients with an Infectious Disease

- G** Keep the client's laundry separate from other family members' laundry.
- G** Handle dirty laundry as little as possible. Do not shake it. Sort it and put it in plastic bags in the client's room or bathroom. Take it immediately to the laundry area. Do not place soiled laundry directly on the floor.

- G Wear gloves and hold laundry away from your clothes and body when you are handling it (Fig. 21-11).



Fig. 21-11. Wear gloves and hold dirty laundry away from your clothes.

- G Use liquid bleach when fabrics allow.
- G Use agency-approved disinfectants in all loads.
- G Use hot water.

9. List guidelines for teaching housekeeping skills to clients' family members

In some assignments, an HHA will be asked to teach housekeeping skills to family members. This prepares them to take over housekeeping and care when home care is discontinued. By teaching household management skills, the HHA helps families meet their daily needs and become more self-reliant.

Guidelines: Teaching Family Members

- G Get to know the family before starting to teach them. Understand their needs or problems before beginning.
- G Be patient. Give people time to learn new skills. Praise their efforts.
- G Keep teaching sessions brief.
- G Break down tasks into simple steps. Explain each step and demonstrate it.
- G Answer all questions.

- G Assist the person as necessary. Do not do the task for her.
- G Remember that each person is an individual and will learn in different ways. Providing person-centered care means customizing your teaching to allow for these differences.

Using Proper Body Mechanics in the Home

The principles of body mechanics are located in Chapter 6. The following additional tips should be used when working in a home:

- Bend the knees, not the back, when lifting things from the floor or when kneeling to pick up objects.
- Carry heavy objects close to the body and distribute the weight evenly. For example, when carrying a basket of clothes, hold it directly in front of the body (Fig. 21-12). Do not twist at the waist.
- Stand close to the work area. When possible, raise the work area to a comfortable level so you do not have to bend your back and neck to do the work. For example, put the clothes basket on a chair before filling it (Fig. 21-13).
- Try not to lift heavy objects. If you must move heavy objects such as furniture, try pushing or rolling, using the entire body.
- Avoid lifting heavy objects from the floor.
- Stand erect when doing tasks like washing dishes. Your knees may be slightly bent.



Fig. 21-12. Holding objects close to the body helps prevent back strain and injury.



Fig. 21-13. By placing the basket on a chair close to her, this HHA avoids excessive bending and reaching.

10. Discuss the importance of sleep and explain why careful bedmaking is important

Sleep is a natural period of rest for the mind and body. As a person sleeps, the mind and body's energy is restored. During sleep, vital functions are performed. These include repairing and renewing cells, processing information, and organizing memory. Sleep is essential to a person's health and well-being.

Many elderly persons have sleep problems. Many things can affect sleep, such as fear, anxiety, noise, diet, medications, and illness. When a client complains that he is not sleeping well, the HHA should observe and report any of the following:

- Sleeping too much during the day
- Eating or drinking items that contain caffeine late in the day
- Wearing nightclothes during the day
- Eating heavy meals late at night

- Refusing to take medication ordered for sleep
- Taking new medications
- Having TV, computer, phone, radio, or light on late at night
- Experiencing pain

A lack of sleep causes many problems, such as decreased mental function, reduced reaction time, and irritability. Sleep deprivation also decreases immune system function. Any client complaints about a lack of sleep should be reported to the supervisor.

When clients spend much or all of their time in bed, careful bedmaking is essential to their comfort, cleanliness, and health. Linens should always be changed after personal care procedures such as bed baths or any time bedding or sheets are damp, soiled, or in need of straightening. Bed linens should be changed often for these reasons:

- Sheets that are damp, wrinkled, or bunched up under a client are uncomfortable. They may prevent the client from resting or sleeping well.
- Microorganisms thrive in moist, warm environments. Bedding that is damp or unclean encourages infection and disease.
- Clients who spend long hours in bed are at risk for pressure injuries. Sheets that do not lie flat under the client's body increase the risk of pressure injuries because they cut off circulation.

If a client cannot get out of bed, a home health aide must change the linens with the client in bed. An **occupied bed** is a bed made while the client is still in the bed. When making the bed, the HHA should use a wide stance and bend her knees to avoid injury. Bending from the waist should be avoided, especially when tucking sheets or blankets under the mattress. The height of the bed should be raised, if possible, to make the job easier and safer.

Making an occupied bed



Equipment: clean linen—mattress pad, fitted or flat bottom sheet, disposable absorbent pad (if needed), cotton draw sheet, flat top sheet, blanket(s), bedspread (if used), bath blanket, pillowcase(s), gloves

1. Wash your hands.
2. Explain the procedure to the client, speaking clearly, slowly, and directly. Maintain face-to-face contact whenever possible.
3. Provide privacy if the client desires it.
4. Place clean linen on a clean surface within reach (e.g., bedside stand or chair).
5. If the bed is adjustable, adjust the bed to a safe level, usually waist high. If the bed is movable, lock the bed wheels.
6. Put on gloves.
7. Loosen top linen from the end of the bed on the working side.
8. Unfold the bath blanket over the top sheet to cover the client, and remove the top sheet. Keep the client covered at all times with the bath blanket.
9. You will make the bed one side at a time. Raise the far side rail (if bed has them). This protects the client from falling out of the bed while you are making it. Then go to the other side of the bed. Help the client turn onto her side, moving away from you, toward the raised side rail (see Chapter 12).
10. Loosen the bottom soiled linen, mattress pad, and absorbent pad, if present, on the working side.
11. Roll the bottom soiled linen toward the client, soiled side inside. Tuck it snugly against the client's back.
12. Place the mattress pad (if used) on the bed, attaching elastic at corners on the working side.

13. Place and tuck in the clean bottom linen or fitted bottom sheet, finishing with the bottom sheet free of wrinkles. If a flat sheet is used, leave enough overlap on each end to tuck under the mattress. If the sheet is only long enough to tuck in at one end, tuck it in securely at the top of the bed. Make hospital corners to keep the bottom sheet wrinkle-free (Fig. 21-14). If a fitted sheet is used, tightly pull two fitted corners on the working side.



Fig. 21-14. Hospital corners help keep the flat sheet smooth under the client. They help prevent a client's feet from being restricted by or tangled in linen when getting in and out of bed.

14. Smooth the bottom sheet out toward the client. Be sure there are no wrinkles in the mattress pad. Roll the extra material toward the client and tuck it under the client's body (Fig. 21-15).



Fig. 21-15. Tuck extra material under the client's body.

15. If using a disposable absorbent pad, unfold it and center it on the bed. Tuck the side near you under the mattress. Smooth it out toward the client, and tuck as you did with the sheet.
16. If using a draw sheet, place it on the bed. Tuck it in on your side, smooth, and tuck as you did with the other bedding.
17. Raise the side rail (if used) nearest you. Go to the other side of the bed and lower that side rail. Help the client roll or turn onto the clean bottom sheet, toward the raised side rail. Explain that she will be moving over a roll of linen. Protect the client from any soiled matter on the old linens.
18. Loosen the soiled linen. Check for any personal items. Roll the linen from the head to the foot of the bed. Avoid contact with your skin or clothes. Do not shake soiled linen. Soiled bed linens are full of microorganisms that should not be spread to other parts of the room. Place it in a hamper or basket. Never put it on the floor or furniture.
19. Pull the clean linen through as quickly as possible. Start with the mattress pad and wrap around corners. Pull and tuck in clean bottom linen just like the other side. Pull and tuck in disposable absorbent pad and draw sheet (if used). Make hospital corners with the bottom sheet. Finish with the bottom sheet free of wrinkles.
20. Ask client to turn onto her back, helping as needed. Keep client covered and comfortable,

with a pillow under her head. Raise the side rail nearest you.

21. Unfold the top sheet. Place it over the client and center it. Ask the client to hold the top sheet. Slip the bath blanket out from underneath (Fig. 21-16). Put it in the hamper.
22. Place a blanket over the top sheet, matching the top edges. Place the bedspread over the blanket (if used), matching the top edges. Tuck the bottom edges of the top sheet, blanket, and bedspread under the foot of the bed, making hospital corners on each side. Loosen the top linens over the client's feet. This prevents pressure on the feet. At the head of the bed, fold the top sheet over the blanket about six inches.

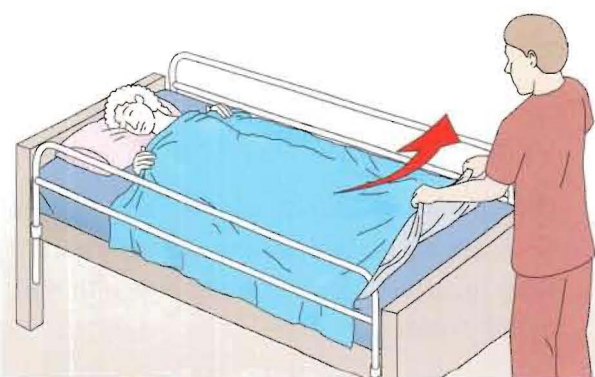


Fig. 21-16. With the client holding on to the top sheet, pull the bath blanket out.

23. Remove the pillow. Do not hold it near your face. Remove the soiled pillowcase by turning it inside out. Place it in the hamper.
24. Remove and discard your gloves. Wash your hands.
25. With one hand, grasp the clean pillowcase at the closed end and turn it inside out over your arm. Next, using the same hand that has the pillowcase over it, grasp the center of the end of the pillow. Pull the pillowcase over it with your free hand (Fig. 21-17). Do the same for any other pillows. Place them under the client's head with the open end away from the door, or as the client desires.



Fig. 21-17. After the pillowcase is turned inside out over your arm, grasp the center of the end of the pillow. Pull the pillowcase over the pillow.

26. If you raised an adjustable bed, return it to its lowest position. Leave side rails in the ordered position. Put any signaling device within the client's reach. Carry the laundry hamper to the laundry area.
27. Wash your hands.
28. Document the procedure and any observations.

Mattresses can be heavy. It is easier to make an empty bed than one with a client in it. An **unoccupied bed** is a bed made while no client is in the bed. If the client can be moved temporarily to a chair or other comfortable spot, the HHA's job will be much easier.

Making an unoccupied bed



Equipment: clean linen—mattress pad, fitted or flat bottom sheet, disposable absorbent pad (if needed), cotton draw sheet, flat top sheet, blanket(s), bedspread (if used), pillowcase(s), gloves

1. Wash your hands.
2. Place clean linen on a clean surface within reach (e.g., bedside stand or chair).

3. If the bed is adjustable, adjust the bed to a safe level, usually waist high. If the bed is movable, lock the bed wheels.
4. Put on gloves.
5. Loosen soiled linen. Roll soiled linen (soiled side inside) from the head to the foot of the bed. Avoid contact with your skin or clothes. Do not shake soiled linen. Place it in a hamper or basket. Never put it on the floor or furniture. Remove pillows and pillowcases and place pillowcases in the hamper.
6. Remove and discard your gloves. Wash your hands.
7. Remake the bed. Start with the mattress pad and wrap around corners. Place clean bottom linen or fitted bottom sheet, finishing with bottom sheet free of wrinkles. If a flat sheet is used, leave enough overlap on each end to tuck under the mattress. If the sheet is only long enough to tuck in at one end, tuck it in securely at the top of the bed. Make hospital corners to keep bottom sheet wrinkle-free. If fitted sheet is used, tightly pull fitted corners over all four corners of the bed.
8. Put on disposable absorbent pad and then draw sheet if used. Place them in the center of the bed on the bottom sheet. Smooth and tightly tuck the bottom sheet and draw sheet together under the sides of the bed.
9. Place the top sheet over the bed and center it. Place the blanket over the bed and center it. Place the bedspread (if used) over the bed and center it. Tuck the bottom edges of top sheet, blanket, and bedspread under the foot of the bed, making hospital corners on each side.
10. Fold down the top sheet over the blanket about six inches. Fold both the top sheet and blanket down so client can easily get into bed. If client will not be returning to bed immediately, leave the bedding up.

11. Put on clean pillowcases (as described in procedure above). Replace the pillows.
12. If you raised an adjustable bed, return it to its lowest position. Carry the laundry hamper to the laundry area.
13. Wash your hands.
14. Document the procedure and any observations.

A **closed bed** is a bed completely made with the bedspread and blankets in place. It is made for clients who will be out of bed most of the day. A closed bed is turned into an **open bed** by folding the linen down to the foot of the bed. This makes it easier for a client to get into the bed in the afternoon for a nap or at bedtime.

11. Identify hazardous household materials

Any of the following household materials can have harmful effects:

- Household bleach
- Cleaning products
- Aerosol or spray cans
- Paint
- Chemicals such as turpentine or paint thinner
- Medicines, both prescription and over-the-counter
- Hair spray
- Nail polish remover

These products should be kept in separate cabinets with childproof latches or locks, or up out of the reach of children. If a client is confused, these cabinets should be marked with signs that indicate danger.

Chapter Review

1. What skills are important in household management?
2. What housekeeping assignments might an HHA be asked to do?
3. What are some housekeeping tasks an HHA should NOT be asked to perform?
4. List ten housekeeping guidelines.
5. Why is it important to read the directions for cleaning products?
6. Why should cleaning products not be mixed?
7. What two parts of a vacuum cleaner should an HHA check often?
8. How often should wastebaskets and ashtrays be emptied?
9. How should an HHA clean the floors if the home does not have a vacuum cleaner?
10. What should an HHA do when washing dishes for clients who have an infectious disease?
11. How frequently should the refrigerator be cleaned?
12. In what time frame should leftover food be eaten?
13. What items should not be washed in the dishwasher?
14. Ideally, where should storage places be located?
15. Describe why it is helpful to make a cleaning schedule.
16. How frequently should an HHA clean the bathroom of a client who has an infectious disease?
17. What is pretreating?
18. What is the safest washing temperature for most garments?

19. How can an HHA reduce the amount of wrinkling after clothes have been dried in the dryer?
20. For a client with an infectious disease, what washing temperature should the HHA use?
21. List five guidelines to follow when teaching family members housekeeping skills.
22. List five factors that can affect sleep.
23. What problems can a lack of sleep cause?
24. When should bed linens be changed?
25. List three reasons why it is important that bed linens be changed frequently.
26. Where should hazardous household materials be kept?