

How to care for the mouth

WARNING TO HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

The attached resource teaches families how to provide personal care to a person being cared for at home at the end of their life.

Cultural protocols, gender protocols and roles and responsibilities vary widely within and between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and families.

Asking the family and those involved in decision making is the best way to find out about cultural and gender protocols and roles and responsibilities so that you know the most appropriate way forward. You should always consider and discuss the appropriateness of your own role and gender in teaching families how to provide personal care.

REMEMBER

- Acknowledge the care the family are already providing
- Ask the family what they need
- Support the family with additional education resources to continue to provide care in the way they have been
- Take relevant disposable items with you, if possible

 **PLEASE REMOVE THIS PAGE BEFORE GIVING THE STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO FAMILIES**

How to care for the mouth

- 🌀 If it is not right for you to clean the mouth, you can ask someone else to help.
- 🌀 If you do not have all the things, just do the best you can.
- 🌀 Your local clinic maybe able to give you some things.

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Things to help you:

Extra things:

- Mouth swabs
- Lip cream
- Spray bottle (water or saliva replacement)
- Towel
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Rubbish bag

Cup of water



Clean washcloth



2

Wash your hands



3

Place towel under person's chin



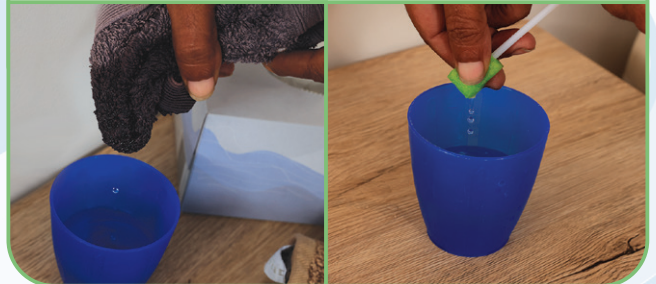
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If the person has dentures, take them out and clean them



4

Wet washcloth OR mouth swab and squeeze out excess water



5

Sweep washcloth OR mouth swab over lips and front of tongue



6

Sweep washcloth OR mouth swab gently around the mouth between cheek and teeth/gums

- ★ Don't go too far back into the mouth



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Dentures can now be replaced

7

Wet the lips with a damp washer OR spray a small amount of liquid at the front of the mouth



8

Apply lip cream, if you have it, to lips



9

Wash the washcloth OR place used mouth swabs in rubbish



10

Wash your hands



Need help? Ring the clinic. 

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