

CLEANSING ENEMA

Description

An injection of a liquid into the rectum or colon. It is generally given as a prepacked sodium phosphate enema, or as a large volume tap water enema (which may contain different ingredients such as salt, soap, etc.)

Purpose

- to stimulate a bowel movement
- to remove all formed fecal material from the colon
- to treat constipation
- to clear the bowel before a medical procedure

Steps and Rationale

Explain the procedure to the patient.

To obtain the patient's consent and co-operation

Ensure privacy

To avoid unnecessary embarrassment to the patient

Allow the patient to empty his/her bladder during the procedure

A full bladder may cause discomfort

Ensure that a bedpan, commode or the toilet is readily available

In case the patient needs to expel the enema before procedure is completed

Warm the enema by immersing in nerves

Heat is an effective stimulant of the intestinal warm water

Assist the patient to lie on their left side with their knees well flexed and their buttocks near the edge of the bed

For ease of passage into the rectum and by law of gravity

Place a disposable incontinence pad beneath the patient's hips and buttocks.

To protect the bed/couch and avoid embarrassment

Wash hands with soap and water, dry thoroughly and put on disposable gloves and apron

To minimise the risk of cross-infection

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Test your knowledge

What are the possible indications that a patient needs a “cleansing enema?”

What are the certain conditions wherein a “cleansing enema” is not to be performed?

Why do you think a cleansing enema should be done to certain patients?

How will a patient benefit from a cleansing enema?