

SECTION: NURSING SERVICES

POLICY #: 410 EAR IRRIGATION

POLICY: Central Valley Health District conducts ear irrigation to remove excess cerumen from the ear canal.

Equipment: Otoscope and appropriate tips

Towel

60cc single use syringe for irrigation or disposable 60cc Irrigation Bulb Syringe.

Butterfly infusion tubing-cut to appropriate length for irrigation

Disposable ear curette

Ear cup

Container for water

PROCEDURE:

1. Examine the ear canal with an otoscope.
2. Explain the procedure to the client and advise the client not to make any sudden moves to avoid trauma from the instruments.
3. Gather necessary equipment.
4. Check the water temperature of the irrigating solution for body temperature.
5. Place towel around neck and over shoulder of client.
6. Tip the client's head to the side and ask client to hold the collection basin.
7. Fill the syringe and expel air.
8. The tip of the irrigating device should be placed just inside the external meatus so that the tip is visible.
9. Straighten the external auditory meatus by gently drawing the pinna up and back in an adult. For an infant, gently pull the pinna down and back.
10. Direct fluid towards the posterior wall of the canal. Flow is to be steady.
11. Stop the irrigation immediately, if the client complains of pain, nausea or vertigo.
12. Examine the ear canal periodically throughout the irrigation process.
13. If cerumen is not removed satisfactorily after a reasonable amount of time, at the nurses discretion, encourage client to use a wax softening agent and return to office in 2-3 days to re-irrigate the ear.
14. Documentation of cerumen removal procedure in client's chart.
15. Refer any abnormalities to family physician.
16. Clean or dispose of equipment appropriately.