

This handout is intended to be a “script” for parents and caregivers to assist women with Down syndrome. It is written with the hope that it will be individualized in developing a long lasting routine of personal hygiene for the woman in your care.

Shower or Bath Daily: *Lather, wash, rinse and dry.*

- Wash with a mild soap using a washcloth or luffa sponge.
- Use enough soap (unscented) so you see lots of bubbles.
- Gently clean from head to toes and then rinse.
- Thoroughly dry your body with a towel.
- Apply body lotion and deodorant after every shower or bath.
- It is important to clean your pubic area, your vulva and vagina, with a mild unscented soap. Less is best. Do not scrub.
- Avoid any scented soaps or bubble baths. They look good but they are NOT the best for your lady parts.
- Cotton underwear should be your standard underwear. Change daily or more frequently if it is soiled.

Shampooing: *Wash once, rinse twice.*

- Wet hair.
- Put some shampoo on your hands and start rubbing the scalp.
- Keep rubbing all over your head until you get a hat of bubbles.
- Rinse with warm water, then rinse again until there is no shampoo.
- Use conditioner in the same way. Apply, rub through your hair and rinse twice.

Hair Care: *Your crowning glory.*

- Brush or comb your hair daily, or as often as is best for your hair type.
- Get haircuts regularly.

Face Washing: *A smile is your gift to give.*

- Wash your face in the morning and before bedtime. Use a mild soap or facial cleanser.
- Use your hands or a washcloth to wash your face and neck.
- Use warm water to rinse.
- Apply mild face lotion to face and neck once or twice a day.
- Brush your teeth after washing your face. Then SMILE!

Underarms: *To shave or not to shave?*

- Underarm hair is normal. If you chose to remove the hair under your arms, you may need help in learning how to use a razor or an electric razor.
- If using a single blade razor, apply shaving cream or soap under your arm and gently shave downward.
- If using an electric razor, shave in an up and down motion.
- Clean razor after use and change the blade or head as indicated by the brand.
- After drying your armpits, apply deodorant. Use a stick, roll on or spray.

Legs: *Hair today, gone tomorrow?*

- Shave your legs weekly or as often as you feel comfortable.
- Use either an electric razor or razor with replaceable blades.
- Shaving is most easily done at the bathroom sink. You may need help sometimes.
- Wet your legs with water and lather on a good amount of soap or shaving cream.
- Start at the bottom and slowly and gently move the razor up your leg. Be careful around your ankles and knees.
- Rinse legs when done.
- Clean razor.
- Change razor blade or head as indicated by the brand.

Breasts: *It's uplifting, girlfriend!*

- A bra is underwear. It is best to wear one every day. It can be an underwire bra, soft cup bra or sports bra.
- Make sure it's clean.

What is the best time for you to do this routine?

Some like to shower in the morning; some like to shower at night. Either time is great. You decide.

Looking good starts with being healthy and clean.

Remember, the most important thing to wear is a SMILE!!