

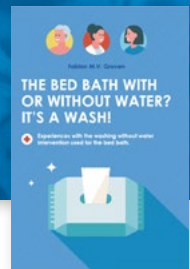


factsheet



The bed bath with or without water? It's a Wash! Experiences with the washing without water intervention for the bed bath

The content of this factsheet is based on the eponymous doctoral dissertation of Fabian Groven. The doctoral dissertation of Fabian Groven can be found on the website of the Living Lab in Ageing & Long-term Care | awolimborg.nl



Why was this research executed?

Washing without water is increasingly used in health care, amongst others in home care, nursing homes and hospitals. However, not much research has been done to the effectiveness of washing without water and to the user experiences of caregivers and care recipients. With this research, we want to contribute to the scientific knowledge about washing without water.

Research objective

The objectives of this research are to:

- get a better view of caregivers' experiences with the bed bath and the use of washing without water;
- get a better view of care recipients' experiences with the bed bath and the use of washing without water;
- assess whether washing without water is a suitable alternative for the traditional bed bath based on users' experiences.

Results

Nursing home residents, professional caregivers, and informal caregivers all find the bed bath an important activity, but they have different needs with respect to the bed bath. Nursing home residents have the need to experience control, to feel physically and emotionally safe, to have friendly interactions with caregivers, and to feel competent during and after the bed bath.

Professional caregivers also have the need to feel emotionally safe and to have a good relationship with the resident. In addition, they need to feel competent as a health care professional: contributing to residents' satisfaction and being valued for that is important to them.

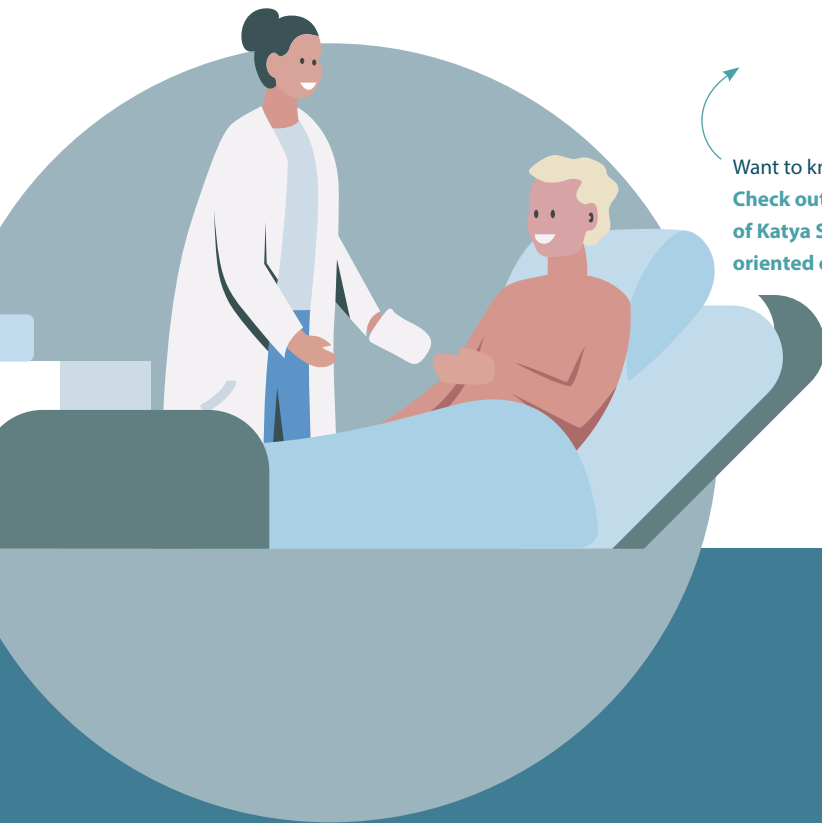
What is washing without water?

Washing without water is an alternative for the traditional bed bath (with wash basins, water and soap) of bedridden care recipients. Just like the traditional bed bath, a washing without water bed bath is executed by a professional caregiver. For a washing without water bed bath, the caregiver uses a package with disposable wipes or mitts (sometimes called gloves) that can be heated in a microwave. The wipes and mitts contain a no-rinse, skin-treating wash lotion. Towels are not needed because the wash lotion evaporates by air.



Informal caregivers are often less directly involved in the bed bath of their family member in the nursing home. They indicated that it is important to them to feel assured that the resident is well taken care of. In addition, it is important to them to have good relationships with both the resident and professional caregivers.

If the bed bath can fulfill the needs of residents, professional caregivers, and informal caregivers simultaneously, the well-being of the complete actor network or "care triad" increases. Hence, to provide the most optimal level of care, the needs of the complete care triad need to be fulfilled as much as possible.



Want to know about the care triad?
Check out the doctoral dissertation of Katya Sion on relationship-oriented care.

The care triad

We assume that good care evolves out of the interactions between the care recipient, professional caregivers, and informal caregivers. We call the combination of these three perspectives the “care triad”.

There is a lack of scientific literature about user experiences with the washing without water bed bath. The scientific literature that is available shows that washing without water is at least as good as the traditional bed bath, amongst others with respect to hygiene, care recipients’ skin condition, and the completeness and quality of the bed bath.

Bed bath for and by nursing students

Nursing students who were bathed in bed as a care recipient in our research indicated to have a slight preference for the traditional bed bath. However, the grades that these students gave to both bed bath methods did not differ. Furthermore, no difference was found between both bed bath methods in emotional or physical comfort experienced by these students.

The nursing students that provided bed baths to their fellow students in our research preferred the washing without water bed bath over the traditional bed bath. The grade that they assigned to the traditional bed bath was 7.2 (on a scale from 1 to 10) compared to 7.9 for the washing without water bed bath. Furthermore, the washing without water bed bath was less physically demanding for these students. Also, the washing without water bed bath took less time: on average 15 minutes compared to 23.5 minutes for the traditional bed bath.



How is the research executed?

First, we collected available scientific literature to get an overview of the already existing evidence on the effectiveness of, and the user experiences with the use of washing without water. Second, we explored experiences with the bed bath (in general) by interviewing nursing home residents, professional caregivers, and informal caregivers. Eight residents, six professional caregivers, and five informal caregivers participated in this qualitative study.



In yet another study of this research, nursing students experienced both the traditional bed bath and the washing without water bed bath, either as a care recipient or as a caregiver. We studied the duration of the bed bath and comfort experienced during both bed baths. For the students that received both bed baths as a care recipient, we studied emotional and physical comfort. For the students that provided both bed baths as a caregiver, we studied the physical burden of the bed bath. We also asked both groups for their bed bath method preference.



The most important findings

- For both the professional caregiver and the care recipient, the bed bath is an important health care activity that contributes to their well-being.
- Because the bed bath is an important health care activity, it is important for nursing students to be well educated in and about the bed bath.
- The washing without water bed bath is at least as good as the traditional bed bath. The use of washing without water does not reduce quality of care.
- The washing without water bed bath takes less time than the traditional bed bath and is less physically demanding for professional caregivers. Especially in times of high work pressure (e.g. during pandemics), the use of washing without water can be valuable.
- Care recipients should have the choice between a washing without water bed bath and a traditional bed bath.



Summarized

- For both professional caregivers and care recipients, the bed bath is an important health care activity that influences their daily activities and well-being.
- The available scientific literature shows that the washing without water bed bath is at least as good as the traditional bed bath with water and soap, amongst others with respect to the completeness of the body wash, skin condition and hygiene.
- Nursing students that were assigned to be a professional caregiver in our research, had a preference for washing without water compared to the traditional bed bath. The washing without water bed bath is less physically demanding and takes less time. For the nursing students that were assigned to be a care recipient in our research, no difference was found between the traditional bed bath and the washing without water bed bath with respect to physical and emotional comfort.



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