

Avoid use of isopropyl alcohol for skin prep or removal of other disinfectants.

Transepidermal Water Loss

Minimize transepidermal water loss (TEWL) and heat loss in small preterm infants at <30 weeks of gestation by:

- Maintaining ambient humidity during first weeks of life.
- Applying occlusive polyethylene body bag immediately at delivery and removing after infant is stabilized in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU).
- Considering increasing humidity to 70% to 90% by using a humidified incubator for first 7 days; decrease to 50% until 28 days of age.
- Using supplemental conductive heat and reduce radiant heat source.

Skin Breakdown

Prevention

Decrease pressure from externally applied forces using water, air, or gel mattresses; or cotton bedding.

Provide adequate nutrition, including protein, fat, and zinc.

Apply transparent adhesive dressings to protect arms, elbows, and knees from friction injury.

Use emollient in the diaper area (groin and thighs) to reduce urine irritation.