**day 5 summary**

**Helping the Elder Care for the Mouth**

* Ensure that the elder brushes teeth twice a day
* Ensure that the elder has a soft-bristled toothbrush and toothpaste available
* Replace the toothbrush every three months
* Ensure the comfort of holding the toothbrush for an elder suffering from arthritis
* Use the correct way to brush teeth
* Use the correct way to floss teeth
* Help the elder use mouth wash correctly
* Encourage the elder to visit the dentist regularly
* Clean the gums and tongue of an elder who does not have natural teeth

**Caring for an Elder with Dentures**

* Encourage the elder with dentures to visit the dentist regularly
* Serve food that is easy to eat
* Remind elders to be careful when eating food that is hot or includes bones
* Brush dentures twice a day with a soft bristled toothbrush
* Do not use toothpaste on dentures
* Remind elders to take dentures off before they sleep.
* Soak the dentures in water overnight
* Dry dentures after brushing them in the morning

**Hair care for the Elder**

To help keep the elder’s hair clean:

* + Wash their hair regularly
  + Wash their hair in the bathroom sink if the elder is semi-dependent
  + Use a hair washing tray if the elder is bedridden
  + Use a dry shampoo when the hair cannot be washed

**Care of Nails, Ears and Nose**

To help keep the elder’s hair clean:

* Cut the elder’s nails on the fingers and toes once a week
* Encourage the elder to clean their nails and wash hands after using the toilet, returning from a public place, touching door handles, elevators, or banisters as well as after handling money
* Avoid using inferior quality nail polish
* Avoid buffing the nails
* Clean the external ear every day
* Clean the external ear along the spiral of the ear with a moisturized cotton bud
* Never put a cotton bud, sharp key, or hairpin inside the auditory canal to clean wax
* Clean the area behind the ear everyday
* You may trim the hair on the elder’s ear, but do not try to trim the hair inside the canal
* Clean the part of the hearing aid that goes inside the ear every day
* Clean the elder’s headphones; ask them not to share headphones
* Ask the elder to gently blow the nose once or twice a day. Alternatively, you can clean the nose with the finger wound around a soft handkerchief
* Trim the hair that is growing outside the nose with a small pair of scissors
* Never trim the hair inside the nose
* Clean the part of the Ryle’s tube coming out of nose
* Adjust the nasal prongs and tubes such that they do not hurt the nose
* In case of a nosebleed, pinch the nostril firmly for 5 to 10 minutes
* Ask the elder to breathe from the mouth

**Some common foot problems are:**

* + Athlete’s foot,
  + Blisters,
  + Corns and calluses,
  + Foot odor,
  + Ingrown nails,
  + Bunions,
  + Hammertoe,
  + And heel pain

**To take care of the elder’s feet:**

* + Make sure the elder washes their feet well with soap and lukewarm water
  + Ensure that the feet are dried well
  + Apply a moisturizing lotion
  + Ensure that the elder wears clean, soft socks
  + Make sure that the shoes and sandals fit the elder well
  + Examine the elder’s shoes every day
  + Trim nails straight across, slightly longer than the end of the toe