



Japan Council for Quality Health Care

Project to Collect Medical Near-Miss/  
Adverse Event Information

## Medical Safety Information

No.87, February 2014

# Burns during a Foot Bath or Shower

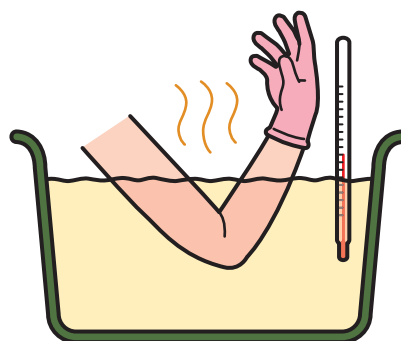
Three cases have been reported involving a burn caused by the failure to check the temperature of the water properly when giving a foot bath or shower, because gloves were left on when checking the temperature (information collection period: from January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2013; the information is partly included in “Medical Adverse Event Information to be Shared” (p.138) in the 8th Quarterly Report).

**Cases have been reported in which a burn was caused by the failure to check the temperature of the water properly when giving a foot bath or shower, because gloves were left on when checking the temperature.**

Image of case



Image of preventive measures  
taken at the medical institutions



- ◆ The three reported cases involved patients who could not communicate adequately, as a result of disturbance of consciousness due to encephalitis, etc.

## Burns during a Foot Bath or Shower

### Case 1

When giving a foot bath to a patient with disturbance of consciousness, the nurse left his/her gloves on while checking the temperature of the water and went ahead with the foot bath. When s/he subsequently checked the patient's skin, s/he discovered burns, with blistering from the patient's lower legs to the soles of his/her feet.

### Case 2

When giving a shower to a patient who could only communicate by blinking, the bathing assistant checked the temperature of the water while still wearing gloves, and then poured the water onto the patient's lower body. After finishing the shower, the bathing assistant thought that the patient's right thigh seemed red. When s/he checked the patient's skin after transferring the patient to his/her room, s/he discovered that the patient had suffered burns, with redness from the right abdomen through to the right lower leg and scrotal region, and excoriation of part of the lower leg.

#### Preventive measures taken at the medical institutions in which the events occurred.

- Staff will use the following methods to check the temperature of water before using it on patients:
  - Staff members will use a thermometer to check the temperature.
  - Staff members will use the skin on the medial side of the staff member's upper arm to check the temperature.

\* As part of the Project to Collect Medical Near-Miss/Adverse Event Information (a Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare grant project), this medical safety information was prepared based on the cases collected in the Project as well as on opinions of the "Comprehensive Evaluation Panel" to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of medical adverse events. See quarterly reports and annual reports posted on the Japan Council for Quality Health Care website for details of the Project.

<http://www.med-safe.jp/>

\* Accuracy of information was ensured at the time of preparation but cannot be guaranteed in the future.

\* This information is intended neither to limit the discretion of healthcare providers nor to impose certain obligations or responsibilities on them.

