

Care Plan for Person With Scleroderma

Tick	Problem	Management
	Diminished elasticity in blood vessel walls causes increased susceptibility to cold and painful spasms in extremities. (Raynaud's Phenomenon).	Provide extra blankets. Avoid draughts. Maintain warmth, particularly pre and post-op when patient unable to communicate.
	Oesophageal reflux. Oesophagitis.	Elevate head of bed. Provide extra pillows. Sit upright when eating and after meals. Administer anti-acids after meals.
	Reduced oesophageal peristalsis.	Discuss food preferences and swallowing difficulties. Ensure adequate and appropriate dietary intake.
	Bowel involvement. Diarrhoea and/or constipation. Faecal incontinence.	Assess for dietary requirements and medication regime. Refer to dietitian.
	Dry mouth, dry eyes. (Sjogren's Syndrome/sicca syndrome).	Ensure drinking water readily accessible. Mouth toilet when patient unable to drink. Assist with instillation of eye drops or ointment if patient unable to self-administer, particularly pre and post-op and prior to sleeping.
	Fragile skin on hands, prone to ulceration and slow healing.	Provide protection during surgery or procedures. Assist with ADL's as necessary. Refer to occupational therapist.
	Hardened skin.	Extra care required with venipuncture and blood pressure measurement.
	Painful feet.	Avoid injury, e.g. during transfer and ambulation.
	Painful joints.	Assist with repositioning. Provide extra pillows. Massage and application of heat. Anti-inflammatory medications as ordered. Physiotherapy assessment.
	Reduced capacity to cope.	Create calm, supportive environment. Encourage stress reduction techniques. Refer for social work assessment.
	Shortness of breath on exertion.	Allow patient to set the pace during physical activity.
	PREPARATION FOR SLEEP Insufficient clearance of mucus/saliva from airway can create breathing difficulties. Weakness of neck muscles - hard to find comfortable sleeping position.	Administer nebuliser just before bed-time, elevate head of bed. NB - For tall patients: if backrest is tilted, the foot of the bed may need to be extended. Arrange pillows - 'armchair' position may help. A rolled-up small towel may give support to the neck.

For Scleroderma sufferers:

Please tick the boxes which apply to you, add anything extra in the "Notes" box at right, and hand to the nursing staff on admission to a ward.

NOTES: