



Zorgbeest

7. Hygiene

- General regulations:
 - All of those present must wash their hands with soap and water (or with disinfecting alcohol) before and after each cat visit or contact with the cat (Wong et al., 1999; Lefebvre et al., 2008; Ng et al., 2014).
 - Systematically clean the equipment used during the sessions with disinfectants (Kohler, 2011).
 - If the cat contaminates the room with urine, faeces, vomit or blood, it must be cleaned immediately with paper towels and put into a plastic bag and thrown in the bin. The contaminated area is then cleaned with a disinfectant. Disposable gloves are recommended (Wong et al., 1999; Duncan et al., 2000; Khan & Farrag, 2000; Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - A towel can be placed on the bed sheets if the patient has any wounds on his/her body (Khan & Farrag, 2000). Depending on the type of wound or where it is located, it is advisable not to allow the cat on the bed (Ng et al., 2015).
 - If necessary, provide a towel or apron when the cat jumps onto the patient's lap to protect the patient's legs against, for example, sharp nails (Ophorst et al., 2014).
 - Change clothes after each visit if necessary. This depends on the amount of contact and patient vulnerability (Ophorst et al., 2014).

- Patients:
 - Screen in advance to find out if there are patients or care personnel with a fear of or allergy to cats (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - Contact with animals should be kept to a minimum for patients with contagious diseases, open wounds, catheters or IVs (Ng et al., 2014; Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - For patients who are in intensive care or quarantine, cat visits must be limited. (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - Ensure that all patients with a potential immune deficiency have been given permission from their attending doctor to come into contact with the cat (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - Patients may not interact with cats when they are drinking or eating (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - It is best for patients not to have any oral contact with the cats to limit the risk of contamination via saliva (Wong et al., 1999; Ng et al., 2014; Lefebvre et al., 2008).

- Cats:
 - Cats used in AAI should not be given any raw meat (especially cats permanently residing in hospitals) (Wong et al., 1999; Lefebvre et al., 2008).



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- The cat's fur is clean and free of fleas or ticks (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
- Counsellor or patient care giver:
 - Allow the cat to approach patients on the side where there are no invasive medical devices such as catheters or IVs. (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - Prevent the cat from licking or knocking over medical equipment (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
- Areas:
 - It is recommended to restrict access to some parts of the facility and not let them run free in the facility. A separate area or room with free access to the outdoors (outdoors is open or enclosed e.g. a cage or aviary) is even better.
 - Prohibit cats in the following areas:
 - kitchen;
 - medication preparation and storage rooms;
 - operating theatre;
 - neonatology ward;
 - dialysis units (except under special circumstances and with permission from the attending doctor) (Lefebvre et al., 2008);
 - burn wards (except under special circumstances and with permission from the attending doctor) (Lefebvre et al., 2008).
 - It is important to choose a room for the visits that can be cleaned thoroughly and relatively easily (Ophorst, 2014).