



# Bathing Battles & Hygiene Hesitation





# When Bathing Becomes a Battle

Resistance to bathing is common — it's often about fear, confusion, or feeling exposed.

It's not defiance. It's discomfort.

## Fear

Many experience anxiety around bathing due to vulnerability

## Confusion

The bathing process may be overwhelming or disorienting

## Exposure

Feeling exposed can trigger embarrassment and resistance



# Common Reasons They Refuse



## Embarrassment or modesty

Feeling vulnerable when undressed



## Disorientation in water

Feeling unsafe or confused during bathing



## Fear of falling

Anxiety about slipping in wet environments



## Past trauma

Previous negative experiences affecting current comfort



# Shift the Framing



## Change Your Language

Say "Let's freshen up" instead of "It's time to shower"



## Provide Options

Offer choices: "Would you like a bath or a sponge today?"



## Focus on Comfort

Emphasize feeling refreshed rather than cleanliness





# Make it Feel Safe

## Prepare the Environment

Warm the room beforehand

## Create Comfort

Use soft lighting and soothing tones

## Offer Reassurance

Offer a warm towel or robe for comfort

# Maintain Their Dignity

## Encourage Independence

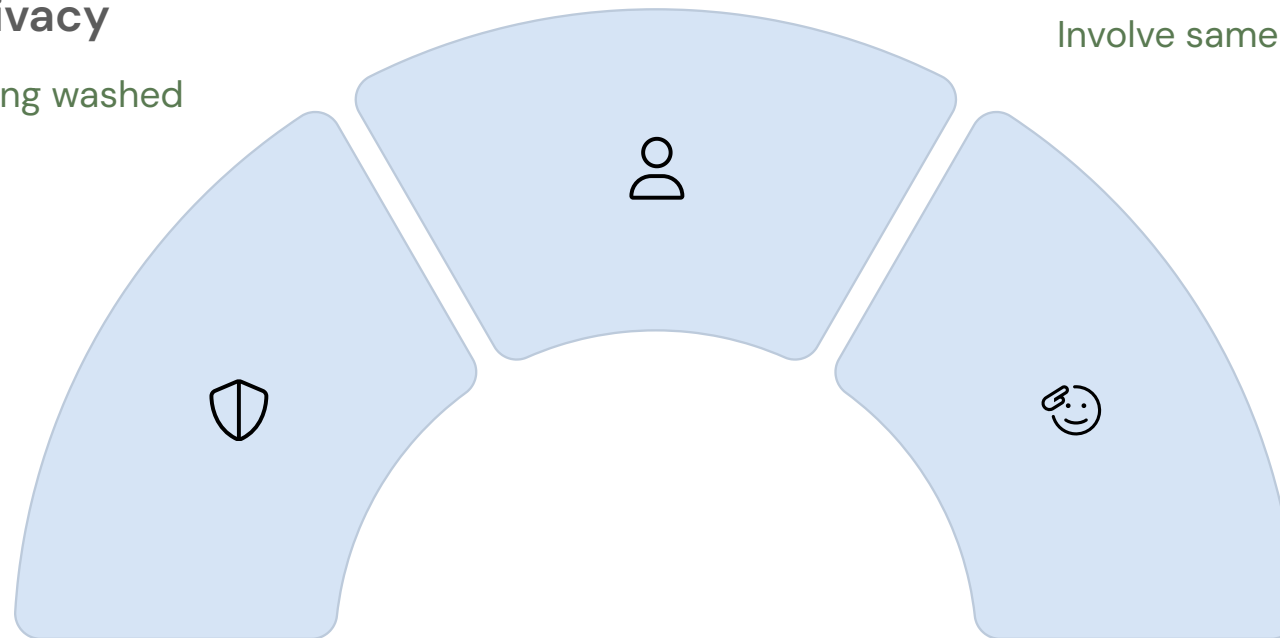
Let them wash parts they can  
themselves

## Preserve Privacy

Cover areas not being washed

## Respect Preferences

Involve same-gender caregivers if that  
helps







# Turn Bathing Into Connection



## Play relaxing music

Create a soothing atmosphere with gentle sounds



## Use a favourite-scented soap

Familiar scents can create positive associations



## Offer praise: "You must feel so refreshed now."

Positive reinforcement enhances the experience

# If It's Just Not Working Today...



## Minimal Cleaning

Wipe face, hands, underarms with a warm cloth

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## Try Again Later

Try again later or the next day

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## Accept What Works

Clean enough is okay



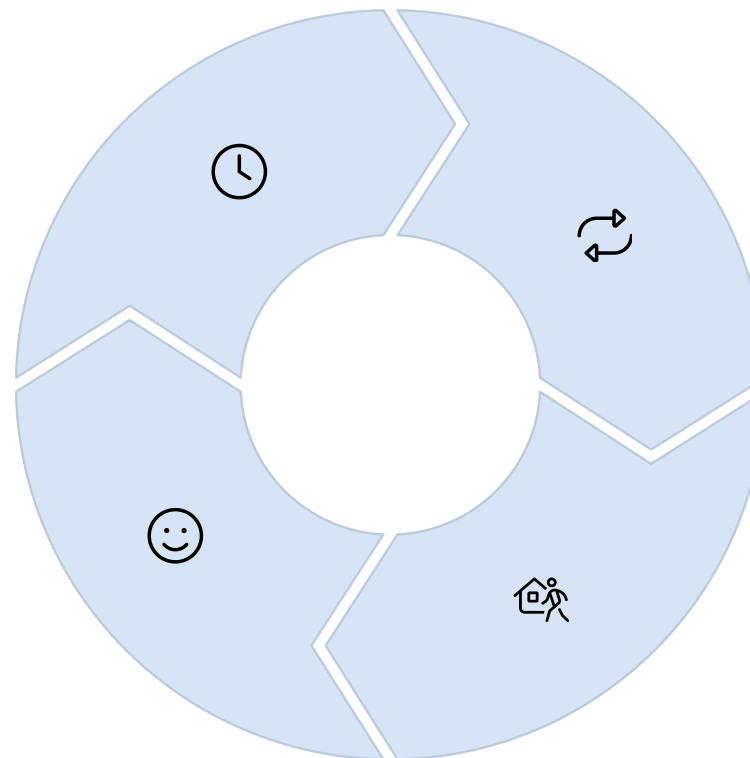
# Keep Routines Gentle and Consistent

## Same Time Daily

Bathing at the same time of day can build comfort

## Positive Association

Build pleasant memories around hygiene routines



## Consistent Process

Follow the same steps each time

## Familiar Setting

Reinforce familiarity

# Ask Your Navigate Dementia Support Companion

## 1

### Safety Questions

"How can I help them feel safe during bathing?"

## 2

### Refusal Strategies

"What should I do when they refuse hygiene care?"

## 3

### Dignity Tips

"Are there dignity-preserving hygiene tips?"

