**Suggested Answers to Discussion Topics, Chapter 27, Caring for People Who Are Dying**

| Suggested Answers for Topics for Discussion | Learning Objective(s) |
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| 1a. Students’ responses should include the following:   * Vital signs will change, indicating circulatory failure. * Skin changes will occur. * Respiratory pattern will change. Georgia may have Cheyne–Stokes respirations, and you will note the “death rattle.” * Evidence of diminished digestive activity will occur, leading to decreased intake and bowel problems. * Side effects of pain medications may cause Georgia to be constipated. * Georgia may become oliguric, anuric, or incontinent. * Increasing muscle weakness will develop. * There may be decreased sensation and signs of diminished vision. * They might develop alterations in consciousness.   1b. Students’ responses should include the following:   * You should inform the nurse about the bowel problems they are having, and follow the nurse’s direction. * As you work with them and turn them, be very gentle so as not to cause any additional pain. * Keep their skin clean and dry. Check pressure point areas for skin changes. * Apply lotion and gently massage their feet, legs, arms, and back. * If they have a catheter in place, provide catheter care and maintain the collection device. * Before starting care, check with their husband to make sure they have been medicated for pain at least 20 minutes before you begin. * Reposition them and place them in good body alignment. * Provide frequent mouth care, and keep mucous membranes moist. * Remove soiled linens, bedpans, or emesis basins and use air freshener if necessary. * Ask them if their pain medication is keeping them free from pain. Report immediately to the nurse any breakthrough pain they complain of. * Offer them fluids and foods they prefer. * Offer to read to them, talk with them about subjects they are interested in. * Be a good listener. | 1, 3 |
| 2a. Students’ responses should include the following:   * Remember that Samuel may be going through a grieving process. * Help Samuel understand that Georgia will stop eating as the dying process continues. * Help Samuel by explaining to them that Georgia may have periods of consciousness and awareness. * Help Samuel by simply sitting with them and encouraging them to talk about their concerns and fears. * Tell Samuel that Georgia may be able to hear what they are saying, even if Georgia seems to be unconscious. * Tell Samuel they should continue to talk to Georgia. * If they want to, Samuel can assist you in providing care to Georgia, and thus avoid losing an opportunity to talk with them should they become alert.   2b. Students’ responses should include the following:   * Respond by telling Georgia that you are there with them. * Ask them if they have a special prayer they want said. * If they ask you to read a prayer from their prayer book, do so. | 1, 3 4, 5, 6 |
| 3a. Students’ responses should include the following:   * Be aware of any cultural or religious considerations regarding caring for the body. * Clean, align, shroud, and identify the body according to facility policy. * Secure the deceased’s belongings according to facility policy. | 7 |