

Activity 4 – Washing and bathing

This activity considers a claimant’s ability to wash and bathe.

‘Washing’ means cleaning one’s whole body, including removing dirt and sweat.

Bathing’ means getting into and out of both an unadapted bath **and** an unadapted shower.

If an individual cannot reliably complete an activity in the way described in a descriptor then they should be considered unable to complete it at that level and an alternative descriptor selected.

Notes:

A wet room is not an unadapted shower. If a claimant reasonably requires use of a wet room it could be evidence that the claimant cannot access an unadapted bath or shower. Consideration should be given to the claimant’s ability to use an unadapted bath and shower and ascertain what, if any, help they need in relation to using these

Consideration should be given to the claimant’s functional restrictions to see if they:

- could reasonably use an aid such as a grab rail to get in or out of an unadapted bath or shower (4b)
- or whether they require assistance (4e) to get in and out of an unadapted bath or shower.

.The same principles will also apply when determining whether a claimant requires an aid (4b) or prompting or supervision (4c) to get into or out of an unadapted bath or shower.

Shaving or the ability to dry oneself is not considered in this activity.

A

Can wash and bathe unaided.

Applies to claimants who can wash and bath unaided, including getting in to and out of both an unadapted bath and unadapted shower.

Within the assessment criteria, the ability to perform an activity ‘unaided’ means without either the use of aids or appliances; or help from another person.

The majority of people cannot touch every single part of their back. Most people without a disability cannot access their upper spinal region. If someone needs an aid or appliance or requires assistance simply to reach their upper spinal region this is insufficient in itself to score points as the majority of people experience the same restriction.

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B	Needs to use an aid or appliance to be able to wash or bathe.	
<p>For example: a long-handled sponge to wash parts of the body that people without a disability could access independently, shower seat where the claimant has difficulty standing for the time taken to shower, or bath rail where there are issues with balance, stability or upper body strength. If a claimant uses a shower attachment on a bath, this should be considered as an unadapted shower.</p>		2
C	Needs supervision or prompting to be able to wash or bathe.	
<p>‘Prompting’ means reminding, encouraging or explaining by another person. For example: may apply to claimants who lack motivation or need to be reminded to wash, or require supervision for safety reasons. When considering safety, the likelihood of a risk to the claimant occurring in both a bath and shower should be considered. If the claimant can wash or bathe the majority of the time without risk of injury, for example because their health condition is under control through medication, then this descriptor would not apply.</p>		2
D	Needs assistance to be able to wash either their hair, or body below the waist.	
<p>For example: may apply to claimants who are unable to make use of aids and who cannot reach their lower limbs, or their hair.</p>		2
E	Needs assistance to be able to get in or out of a bath or shower	3

This descriptor relates to physical assistance by another person and should be applied as a hypothetical test to consider whether the claimant needs assistance to get in to and out of either one of an unadapted bath, or an unadapted shower.

Unadapted baths and showers include a shower over a bath, a shower cubicle (i.e. a partitioned area with a threshold/ledge to step over) and shower attachments to bath taps. Those who cannot access either one of an unadapted bath or shower without assistance from another will qualify for descriptor 4e. A wet room shower, if its use is reasonably required, is evidence that the claimant cannot get into an unadapted shower.

The following decision matrix has been devised to help determine whether a claimant can satisfy 4e:

Does the claimant need assistance to get in or out of a BATH?	Does the claimant need assistance to get in or out of a SHOWER?	Does the claimant score points under descriptor 4e?
Yes	Yes	Yes
Yes	No	Yes
No	Yes	Yes
No	No	No

F	Needs assistance to be able to wash their body between the shoulders and waist.	4
For the purposes of this descriptor, the ability to wash ones upper spinal region is not a consideration.		
G	Cannot wash and bathe at all and needs another person to wash their entire body.	8