Key Steps — Giving an enema

A vintage training film demonstrating the classic enema technique. The checklist below follows the sequence shown, in modern wording.

- ☐ 1. Check the order and explain exactly what you are going to do; screen the bed for privacy.
- ☐ 2. Gather the equipment: enema container, tubing with a clamp, rectal tube, lubricant, bed protection, and a bedpan within reach.
- ☐ 3. Prepare the prescribed solution and check it is comfortably warm — about body temperature for a retention enema.
- ☐ 4. Protect the bed with a waterproof pad and towel, and position the patient lying on their side.
- ☐ 5. Lubricate the end of the rectal tube.
- ☐ 6. Run solution through the tubing to expel the air, then clamp it off.
- ☐ 7. Gently insert the lubricated tube into the rectum.
- ☐ 8. Unclamp and let the solution flow in slowly, keeping the container only modestly raised so the pressure stays gentle.
- ☐ 9. Clamp and remove the tube once the solution has run in, or sooner if the patient cannot tolerate more.
- ☐ 10. For a retention enema, help the patient stay lying down so the solution is retained; for a cleansing enema, help them promptly to the bedpan or toilet.
- ☐ 11. Observe the result and document what was given and what was returned.

Watch the demonstration: medicalvideos.com/watch/enema_4tmhAFcd1duJLMy5Ca2z.html • More Catheters, Tubes & Elimination skills: medicalvideos.com/nursing/catheters-tubes.html
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Steps summarise this demonstration for education and do not replace your institution's protocol, which always governs. Content reviewed by Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim, MD, PhD — physician-scientist. October 2026.