



HAND-HELD SHOWERS

Although the hand-held shower may seem to be a small, less significant accessory item compared to some of the other bath aid products, it is an important part of the self-care package. It is an **essential** item for users of bath seats and transfer benches.

Good quality hand showers have two common features. First, they have on/off controls built into the handle. This allows the user to turn the water off and on as needed without having to readjust water temperature each time. Second, they all have hoses of sufficient length to permit the user, seated on a bath seat or in the tub, to easily reach every part of the body with the shower spray.

The on/off control varies from one model shower to another, and care should be exercised to select an appropriate model that is compatible with your hand function and finger dexterity. A control that is appropriate for a severe arthritic may not be functional for a quadriplegic.

A hose length of 5 1/2 to 6 feet is usually sufficient for most users.

Optional features, such as pulsating massage showers, are primarily a matter of personal taste and are fine as long as they do not interfere with any of the more essential features.

Most hand-held showers are provided with one or more wall-mounting brackets for storage, or to permit use of the shower in a normal wall-mounted position.

INSTALLATION

Installation of a hand-held shower can be made in three ways:

1. It can simply replace an existing shower head. By removing the existing shower head, the hose from the hand-held shower can be attached in its place.
Don't forget the washer to prevent leaking at this attachment point.
2. It can be attached as an addition to the existing shower by using an ***optional*** diverter valve. Remove the shower head and attach the diverter valve, then attach the existing shower head back on the end of the diverter valve. The hose from the hand-held shower can now be attached to the side of the diverter valve. Washers may be required at some or all of these attachment points.

3. If there is no existing shower, the tub spout can be replaced with an *optional* diverter spout and the shower-nose connected to the side of the new spout.

OPERATION

The use of the hand-held shower is self-explanatory. There are a few precautions, however, that should be called to the attention of the user.

When the water has been turned off at the valve on the shower handle, there can be a temperature increase in the water in the initial spray when it is turned back on. After it is turned back on, it is wise to direct this spray away from the body for the first few seconds. This temperature build-up can be avoided by not turning the water completely off and allowing a small stream to continue to flow. This safety feature is built into some hand-held showers and should not be mistaken for a leak or a valve malfunction.

It is wise *NOT* to allow the hand-held shower to fall into the tub or otherwise become immersed in the water standing in the tub. It is possible, under very rare circumstances, for water to be siphoned from the bath water back into the water system in the home, creating a temporary unsanitary condition. This can be easily avoided by placing a wall-mounted storage bracket in an easily accessible position for the user.

A good quality, properly applied hand-held shower can do much to provide greater independence while bathing. Please call or e-mail if more information is needed regarding other helpful bathing aid products.