

THE PATIENT SAFETY FORUM

Sept/Oct, 2008

Catheter Associated Urinary Tract Infections

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As we have written previously in our newsletter, approximately 1,700,000 people are afflicted with healthcare associated infections every year in the United States; 99,000 of those Americans die due to preventable infections.



562,000 people are diagnosed with healthcare associated urinary tract infections (UTI) annually. This represents 32% of all healthcare associated infections, making UTI by far the most common hospital acquired condition. Over 80% of these patients have had a urinary catheter that has preceded the infection.

The CDC predicts that the rate of UTI is 100% for hospital inpatients with an open indwelling urinary catheter for 4 days or more. Adherence to the proper aseptic precautions when inserting the catheter and maintenance of the closed system of drainage may reduce the infection rate to 25%. However, this risk is still high and it is important to use urinary catheters only when medically indicated.

The CDC recommends, "Urinary catheters should be inserted only when necessary and left in place only for as long as necessary. They should not be used solely for the convenience of patient-care personnel." They further recommend, "For selected patients, other methods of urinary drainage such as condom catheter drainage, suprapubic catheterization, and intermittent urethral catheterization can be useful alternatives to indwelling urethral catheterization."



Hand hygiene is also a major way to prevent catheter associated UTI, and all healthcare associated infections for that matter!

"Handwashing should be done immediately before and after any manipulation of the catheter site or apparatus," states the CDC.

Our rule should be to abstain from the use of urinary catheters unless absolutely indicated for the proper treatment of our patients.

Please contact your infection control professional at extension 2-5790 for more information on how to safely insert and maintain a urinary catheter.

The Clinical Practices Of The New Jersey Medical School Faculty Launch New Patient Safety Initiative

Donnett Brown, RN, MSN, MBA – Patient Safety Officer/NJMS



Studies show that when patients and their families/significant others are empowered to be active participants in their care, not only are their outcomes better, but medical errors are prevented. To empower our patients it is our responsibility, as healthcare workers, to create an environment that fosters dialogue between physicians/staff and patients. Exceptional customer service is the first step in this venture. Our patients must feel valued, appreciated, respected, understood, and comfortable in conveying a want or a need. To this end, the Patient Safety Team at The Clinical Practices of the New Jersey

Medical School Faculty has launched a program titled **“Putting Patients First.”** The program, being piloted in the Department of Medicine, is two tiered. Staff is educated on customer service and their role as stewards of customer service. They are also introduced to Ask Me 3, a program designed by The Partnership for Clear Health Communication.

A major barrier to patients’ participation in their care is low health literacy. Nearly half of the adult population in the United States (90 million people) is affected. Health literacy is the ability to read, understand, and **act** on health information. It can affect any population segment regardless of age, race, education, or income and is a strong predictor of health status. Ask Me 3 promotes three simple but essential questions that patients should ask their providers in every health care interaction. Providers should encourage their patients to understand the answers to:

1. **What is my main problem?**
2. **What do I need to do?**
3. **Why is it important for me to do this?**



Your Opinion Matters.

During October 2008, all University Hospital staff will have the opportunity to answer a Safety Culture Survey.

Sample Question:

When an event is reported, it feels like the person is being written up, not the problem.

Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neither 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If we miss you at your regular staff meeting, please call 2-7917 to receive a survey.

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