The Role of Aromatherapy in Postoperative Nausea and Vomiting
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Clinical/Evidenced Based Practice: Postoperative Nausea and Vomiting (PONV) is a common complaint following surgery. Complications related to PONV can cause prolonged post anesthesia care unit stays, unanticipated hospital admissions, surgical complications and psychological discomfort. A nursing PACU evidenced-based practice committee investigated the use of aromatherapy as a complimentary treatment for PONV. Isopropyl alcohol (IPA) is currently being used by PACU nurses at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center as an aromatherapy treatment for PONV without the evidence to support its use. An evidenced – based review was conducted regarding the use of aromatherapy for PONV. The search produced meta-analyses and randomized control trials. The Clinical Guidelines for the Prevention and/or Management of PONV formulated through an evidence- based review by the American Society of Peri-Anesthesia was utilized. Aromatherapy agents such as IPA, ginger, and peppermint were ranked as effective rescue interventions for PONV. A multi-disciplinary meeting was held to review our current practice. Aromatherapy was approved as a rescue intervention in our PONV guidelines. Based on the presentation of our findings to our oncology nursing colleagues, aromatherapy will be explored as part of the MSKCC antiemetic guidelines for chemo/biologic therapy. A multidisciplinary group is investigating aromatherapy products in addition to IPA that may be used for PONV.