Reducing the Incidence of Postoperative Nausea and Vomiting Begins With Risk Screening: An Evaluation of the Evidence

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Abstract

Postoperative nausea and vomiting (PONV) is a daily concern for patients and perianesthesia nurses. PONV is experienced by approximately one third of all surgical patients. Identification of patients at risk for PONV through preoperative risk assessment is an effective means in reducing the incidence of PONV. Perianesthesia nurses are positioned to implement such risk assessments by using simplified risk scores to identify moderate to high-risk patients. Risk assessment allows for facilitation of targeted prophylaxis which positively impacts the patients' surgical outcome and experience. Targeted prophylaxis is efficacious in reducing the institutional incidence of PONV which decreases resource utilization and cost. The perianesthesia nurse is the crucial component in minimizing the PONV in the post-surgical patient. This evaluation of the evidence reveals that preoperative PONV risk screening leads to decreased incidence of PONV for the surgical patient, improves patient satisfaction and reduces postoperative complications.