EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE: AROMATHERAPY USE FOR THE TREATMENT OF POST OPERATIVE NAUSEA AND VOMITING (PONV)

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Problem/Overview:
PONV is a common side effect experienced by patients following surgery. It can lead to delayed recovery and a decrease in patient satisfaction. The current practice at Gettysburg Hospital is to treat post-operative nausea and vomiting with anti emetic medications. Even though medications are effective, side effects can impact recovery.

EBP Question/Purpose:
The objective was to investigate the effectiveness of aromatherapy as a complementary treatment for post operative nausea and vomiting. The EBP question was: Is aromatherapy effective in the adult post operative patient for nausea and vomiting?

Method/Evidence:
An extensive review of the literature was conducted using the CINAHL, Medline, EBSCO host and PubMed databases from 2004 to 2012. Keywords used in the literature search included: postoperative, nausea and vomiting, and aromatherapy. The Johns Hopkins Nursing Evidence-based Practice (JHEPB) model and guidelines were used to synthesize and translate the evidence. More than 15 articles were reviewed; 14 were found to address the problem and were the focus of study. There were 9 research articles and 5 non-research articles.

Significance of Findings:
The literature review proved to be inconclusive and lacked enough evidence to implement a program without further research. There are minimal research studies that have been conducted on this subject, and those that have been completed have methodological flaws. However, the literature review found some positive results with ginger and peppermint oils and warrants further study on this subject matter.

Implications for Perianesthesia Nurses and Future Research:
As a result of the above findings, a research protocol is being developed to perform a pilot study on the same day surgery and post anesthesia care units. The literature did not report patient preference; therefore, the focus of this study will be to determine patient preference for the use of inhaled peppermint oil for the prevention of PONV.