

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL:

NURSE EDUCATION FOR PROPERLY FITTED ANTI-EMBOLISM COMPRESSION STOCKINGS

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Background Information: The use of anti-embolism compression stockings in the pre and post-operative care units (PACU) are a non-invasive prophylactic nursing intervention that has shown to aide in the prevention of deep vein thrombosis (DVT). However, if the nursing staff is not properly trained in the application and management of anti-embolism compression stockings, patients are placed at increased risk for developing heel pressure ulcers and compromised skin integrity.

Objectives of Project: The goal of this project was to improve nursing compliance with how to properly fit anti-embolism compression stockings. The objectives of this project were to audit the compliance rate of properly fitted compression stockings in perioperative patients, implement a program to educate the nursing staff on proper compression stockings fitting and documentation, and decrease the rates of improperly fitting compression stockings.

Process of Implementation: The quality improvement project included direct clinical observation of 98 patients who had anti-embolism compression stockings placed. In a nursing collaborative with Patient Care Partners (PCPs), each PCP performed an observational audit in the Preoperative, PACU, and Non-Operating Room recovery areas. Based upon data collection, only 84% of patients did have either the compression stockings heels in place with the proper measurements and appropriate lengths. The methods of educating staff included a PowerPoint presentation, in-services, and teach back among the nursing staff. Nursing staff were also given their own anti-embolism measuring tape to use.

Statement of Successful Practice: Post implementation audits of 90 direct clinical observations showed an increase, from 84% to 97%, of properly fitted anti-embolism compression stockings. The increase in compliance of patients with anti-embolism compression stockings and accurate documentation increased among all 3 units to an average of 98%. The reeducation of how to properly fit and apply anti-compression stockings was greatly received by nursing staff.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Implementing a proper education plan, paired with auditing, has increased compliance with proper anti-embolism compression stockings fitting and documentation. This, ultimately, has the benefit of decreasing a patient's risk for developing DVT's, while also affording the least possible risk for skin breakdown while wearing properly fitted anti-embolism compression stockings.