

Understanding Thrombolysis: Improving Patient Care

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Background Information: Thrombolysis is a process used to break up abnormal blood flow in veins and arteries. Catheter-directed thrombolysis treats vascular blockages and improves blood flow by dissolving abnormal blood clots or by mechanically removing the clots using radiology imaging. Understanding the pathophysiology behind what is causing the thrombus in the patient is as important as managing the patient pre and post thrombolysis procedures. Catheter-directed thrombolysis is a minimally invasive endovascular treatment that is used as an adjunct to anticoagulation. This is a procedure that is performed in Interventional Radiology and the nurses that receive these patients need to understand how to manage them. These patients are often critical and need personalized care and close attention.

Objectives of Project: The purpose of this project is to educate nurses in Interventional Radiology (IR), Intensive Care Units (ICU), and other departments about the pathophysiology of the thrombolysis procedure, along with the preparation, management, and post-procedure care of patients undergoing thrombolysis.

Process of Implementation: The IR shared governance team recognized a gap in knowledge regarding Thrombolysis procedures and the care of patients post-procedure. Current evidence was reviewed and an educational Power Point was created. All members of the IR shared governance team reviewed and offered feedback. The IR Director also reviewed the Power Point for content. Education will be uploaded to the health system's education platform.

Statement of Successful Practice: At the conclusion of the education, learners will be able to describe thrombolysis and how the procedure is performed, define deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism and several methods of treatment for both, and explain the care and management of the patient undergoing Thrombolysis.

Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing: Nurses caring for these patients need to understand what to manage and report back to the physician such as changes in mental status, acute headache, nausea/vomiting, and any neurovascular changes. RNs also need to understand appropriate dosages and rates of thrombolytic agents as ordered by the physician in order to properly care for the patient.