

## **Early Bladder Scanning in Outpatient Total Joint Patients Lowers the Length of Stay and Minimizes Hypotension Risk During Ambulation**

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**Abstract Background Information:** We observed dizziness, pallor, and hypotension in our total joint patients during ambulation at a rate of 4–5 times per week. Subsequent bladder scans consistently correlated this event with either volume depletion (minimal urine) or severe urinary retention (overfilling). At the time, we did not initiate a bladder scan until a patient had failed to void within the first two hours of recovery.

**Objectives of Project:** To promote safe and timely discharge, we will implement early bladder scanning for all total joint patients in the PACU. This will ensure prompt intervention for volume deficits or urinary retention, directly preventing bladder overfilling and the associated hypotension, dizziness, and pallor often seen during the first post-operative ambulation, thus decreasing length of stay.

**Process of Implementation:** PACU nurses will be trained to perform admission bladder scans. This instruction will include data-driven evidence connecting early bladder management to a lower incidence of ambulation hypotension. We will continue to monitor the total joint patient length of stay and outcomes for evaluation.

**Statement of Successful Practice:** The monthly incidence of hypotension, dizziness, and pallor during ambulation has significantly decreased from 4–5 times per week to only 2–3 times per month within our total joint patient population (averaging 150 patients per month). The decreased in this outcome has also decreased our average length of stay in our total joint population.

**Implications for Advancing the Practice of Perianesthesia Nursing:** By performing early bladder scanning and promptly managing volume deficits or urinary retention, we enable safer post-operative ambulation for total joint patients, which in turn reduces their length of stay and significantly improves patient and family experience.