Nursing Education for Non-Pharmacological Gas Pain Management in Post-Operative Abdominal Surgery Patients

Allison Meyers BSN, RN  
*Lehigh Valley Health Network*

Jen Molchany BSN, RN  
*Lehigh Valley Health Network*

Gina Murray BSN, RN  
*Lehigh Valley Health Network*

Ruth Rosario BSN, RN  
*Lehigh Valley Health Network*

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Allison Meyers, BSN,RN, Jen Molchany, BSN,RN, Gina Murray BSN, RN, Ruth Rosario, BSN, RN
Lehigh Valley Health Network, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Purpose
• Provide education for nurses regarding proper assessment of gas pain in postoperative patients with abdominal surgery and the usage of different non-pharmaceutical methods as treatment for gas pain.

Evidence
• “Debilitating gas pain is a common sequel for patients who have undergone abdominal surgery.” (Moore, 1995)
• “…good nursing care demands a more active approach than simply limiting opiate analgesia.” (Moore, 1995)
• “Patients can benefit to some degree from suggestions that given in a believable context.” (Disbrow, 1993)

Methods
• Inclusion Criteria: Nurses who work on 4KS/4K, who have regular contact with patients that underwent abdominal surgery, were surveyed regarding their current practice for gas pain assessment and interventions.
• Education was provided via an informative handout that was reviewed with each individual nurse.
• A post - survey was performed to assess if gas pain assessment and the usage of non-opioid interventions to alleviate flatus was improved.

Outcomes

How often do you assess incisional versus gas pain?

Before Education
- Often: 33%
- Always: 67%

After Education
- Often: 17%
- Always: 83%

Nursing Interventions Used to Help Alleviate Gas Pain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Before Education</th>
<th>After Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocking</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before: 33%
After: 67%

Results
• Our evidence showed that increased education provided nurses with a better understanding of the importance in identifying gas versus incisional pain.
• Post survey showed an increase in variety of methods that were being used to help alleviate gas pain including:
  • Abdominal massage, gum chewing, repositioning and rocking

Conclusions
• Additional education increased nursing awareness on the proper mechanisms to assess gas pain.
• The education provided nurses with new interventions to provide patient care.
• To elaborate on this project, the effectiveness of the interventions should be evaluated through patient feedback.
• Additional non-opioid methods of alleviating gas pain need to be explored.


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