

Occlusion Definition

Condition in which the catheter is filled with blood or a precipitant preventing solution flow.

Signs and Symptoms of Occlusion

- Inaccurate flow rate is first sign of a partially occluded catheter
- Infusion ceases as catheter becomes more occluded
- Unable to flush
- Contributing Factors:
 - Solution container allowed to become completely empty
 - Positional catheter placement
 - Inappropriate flushing of catheter
 - Administration of incompatible solutions with precipitant formation
 - Kinked catheter or pinched administration set

Intervention

- Do not flush an occluded catheter because of potential of pushing embolus into the circulation
- Remove peripheral or midline and examine for integrity
- Apply dry sterile dressing to site
- Place new catheter site in opposite extremity if possible (IV team available for iv starts)
- For PICC's and CVC's request IV team to assess
- Obtain order for Alteplase (Cath Flow) 2 mg/2ml
- Send collaborative request to infusion to declot catheter

Preventive Measures

- Follow protocol for flushing catheter
- Frequent monitoring of medication container. Change before container is empty
- Use positive flush method (clamp or remove syringe during instillation of last ml)
- Catheters should be flushed with 0.9% sodium chloride before and after medication to maintain patency

Reference

Core Curriculum for Infusion Nursing Third Edition. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.