
Infusion Related Complications

Occlusion

Definition:

An occlusion is defined as a condition in which the catheter is filled with blood or a precipitant preventing solution flow.

Signs and Symptoms of Occlusion include:

- 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

Interventions:

- 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

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 agency 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

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Reference:

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

