Clinical Practice Update on a Temperature Guideline to Decrease Intraoperative Hypothermia in Patients Undergoing General Anesthesia

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Abstract
Intraoperative hypothermia is a common problem within the operating room. Anesthesia inhibits the body’s normal thermoregulatory response to hypothermia, redistributing heat from the core to the periphery (Brandt et al., 2009). In the event of hypothermia, the incidence of infection triples as there is an increased risk for blood loss, increased risk for cardiac complications, and the thermal discomfort of patients (Brandt et al., 2009). Following a recent clinical practice guideline can help prevent hypothermia.

A descriptive project was organized utilizing current literature. The sample for this study is 45 CRNAs practicing at a multiple system healthcare facility in the Southeast. After education on current practice guidelines, the 9 CRNAs completed the pre-survey and 6 a post survey. Four CRNAs completing the case by case worksheets (N = 45) over 30 days.

Do anesthesia providers (P) using a temperature guideline (I) compared to not using a temperature guideline (C) affect the incidence of hypothermia (O) within the intraoperative period (T) in patients undergoing general anesthesia? The post survey revealed that 50% of the CRNAs observed hypothermia and 50% did not. This number is consistent with the data observed in the case by case worksheet where 48.8% answered that the patient was above 36°C and 48.8% answered the patient was below 36°C. Outcomes of this project is to increase CRNAs cognizance of the patient’s temperature and the different modalities to influence the patient’s temperature.