Aseptic Technique: For the Sake of Our Patients

Objective
Cite surgical unit practices and policies that prevent orthopedic complications

Tipping Point
Balance between a patient’s ability to fight an infection and the number and virulence of the bacteria that contaminate the wound.

Remember Your First Time in the OR? What Did They Tell You?

Rachel’s Story
Disclaimer—all people in this presentation are totally fictional. They are not modeled after any one.
Rachel is admitted to your facility for a total knee arthroplasty this morning. Her knee has been giving her more and more trouble causing difficulties in helping to care for her grandchildren and husband.
SET UP

5 SECOND RULE?

NICE EARRINGS & NO JACKET

TURTLE NECK & A BRIEFCASE?

DIRTY SCRUBS?

PROCEDURE IS UNEVENTFUL WITH NO OBVIOUS BREAKS IN TECHNIQUE. SURGERY COMPLETE ALL IS WELL?
On Friday, Rachel calls Dr. Jones to say she is not feeling as well and that she thinks she is running a fever. He prescribes some oral Keflex and tells her to call him again if she is not better in 24-48 hours.

Sunday, Jeff calls Dr. Jones to say that Rachel is much worse. She is short of breath, her wound is very red, swollen and starting to drain "smelly stuff". Dr. Jones readmits her to the hospital.

WHAT WAS WRONG?
- Normalization of deviance
- Who?
- What?
- Why?

SUE, THE CIRCULATING NURSE
- Breaks in technique
- No warm-up jacket
- Jewelry
- May have walked too close to back table and contaminated it.
- Did not hold herself, Jenny, Dr. Jones & Curt accountable

JENNY--CST
- Breaks in technique
- Questionable practice with flipping onto back table
- Dropped un-opened suture on floor
- Did not hold herself, Sue, Dr. Jones & Curt accountable

Curt CRNA

- Breaks in technique
- Improper attire—turtle neck
- Briefcase in the OR
- "Cranky" attitude makes others uncomfortable correcting his aseptic technique
- Contribution to Normalizing Deviation

Dr. Jones

- Break in technique
- Attire worn home and not changed
- Contribution to Normalizing Deviation
- "Cranky" attitude makes others uncomfortable correcting his aseptic technique

Components of Aseptic Technique

- Attire
- Environmental cleanliness
- Traffic control
- Hand hygiene
- Intra-operative Technique
- Skin Prep

Components of Aseptic Technique

- Sterilization and Maintenance of Sterile Supplies
- What about verification of sterility of packages?
- What is "event related" sterility?
- What about immediate use sterilization?
- Surgical Conscience

Back to Rachel’s Story—What Happens Now?

The Hospital May Suffer a Financial Loss to Care for Rachel’s SSI
WHAT ABOUT RACHEL?

EXPENSIVE

SAVINGS ACCOUNT

HARD TIMES

WHAT WENT WRONG?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability
Actions toward or involving others that reflect the integrity of the person you want to be.
“You have a very responsible position. Every set-up a doctor uses is prepared by a nurse. A good part of the doctor’s success and the patient’s well-being is in your hands. Remember this obligation. Only you can answer the question, “Did I use good surgical technique while preparing and executing this procedure?” Everyone connected with the procedure is sure you did. Have you betrayed these people and yourself?”


References