



Postoperative Care of the Patient with Complications: Deep Vein Thrombosis

Simulated Clinical Experience (SCE™) Overview

Location: Medical-Surgical Unit

History/Information:

A 35-year-old male was admitted via the Emergency Department for a fractured left femur. He was parasurfing and lost control, slamming into some rocks off shore. He was taken to the operating room the day after admission for an open reduction and internal fixation of his left femur. You are assigned to care for him on postoperative day two. He is not married but lives with his girlfriend of five years in a two-story, single-family house. He is athletic and exercises five times a week. He is a construction worker.

Healthcare Provider's Orders:

Activity as tolerated
Regular diet
Saline lock
Antiembolic knee-high stockings
Alprazolam 0.5mg PO prn at hour of sleep for anxiety
Ampicillin 3g in 100mL 0.9% NS IVPB every 12 hours
Hydromorphone 1mg IV for severe pain every 4 hours prn
Diphenhydramine 25mg PO every 4 hours prn pruritus
Hydrocodone 5mg/acetaminophen 325mg 1 tab PO every 4 hours prn
Acetaminophen 650mg PO every 4 hours prn for Temp greater than 38°C
Docusate sodium 100mg PO twice a day (discontinue for loose stools)

Learning Objectives

1. Performs the initial patient assessment (APPLICATION).
2. Identifies and documents normal and abnormal assessment findings (APPLICATION).
3. Designs an individualized plan of care for the management of the surgical orthopedic patient (SYNTHESIS).
4. Designs an individualized plan of care for the management of the patient with a deep vein thrombosis (SYNTHESIS).
5. Prioritizes the potential nursing diagnoses and implementation of care (ANALYSIS).
6. Evaluates patient responses to interventions (ANALYSIS).

Questions to Prepare for the Simulated Clinical Experience

1. Describe the nursing management of the orthopedic postoperative patient. Include in this discussion potential complications, their risk factors, and what is done to prevent these.
2. What is the pathophysiology of deep vein thrombosis (DVT)?
3. What is the medical and nursing management of the patient with a DVT?
4. Identify at least three nursing diagnoses for the patient with a DVT.
5. What community resources are available to assist this patient after discharge?

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