Postoperative Care of the Patient with Complications: Ileus

Simulated Clinical Experience (SCE™) Overview

Location: Patient's Home, Emergency Department, Medical-Surgical Unit

History/Information:
The patient is a 72-year-old female who lives alone in her two-story house. She is at home following an uneventful laparoscopic cholecystectomy in which she stayed overnight for observation. Today is postoperative day two and the home health nurse is making a visit to assess the incisions since the patient lives alone. Upon arriving at the patient's home, the nurse finds the patient complaining of nausea, vomiting, pain, and abdominal fullness.

The patient has been in good health prior to her surgery. She was taking aspirin and a vitamin for health promotion. She was recently widowed when her husband of 50 years unexpectedly died. The patient has one daughter who lives out of state. Her daughter was present after her father's death and for the surgery but could not stay to help care for her mother at home because of her career and family.

Healthcare Provider's Orders:
Discharge instructions/medications included:

- Propoxyphene 65mg/aspirin 100mg 1-2 tablets PO every 6 hours prn for pain
- Monitor incisions for redness, drainage, and warmth
- Diet as tolerated
- Activity as tolerated and encouraged
- Call healthcare provider office for increased pain or fever
- Schedule 2 week postoperative appointment with healthcare provider office

Learning Objectives

1. Interprets the findings from the physical assessment of a patient with an ileus (ANALYSIS).
2. Formulates a nursing plan of care based upon the patholphysiology of ileus and assessment of the patient (SYNTHESIS).
3. Evaluates the patient's response to interventions and modifies the nursing care as appropriate for the patient with ileus (ANALYSIS).
4. Determines other potential postoperative complications the patient is at risk for and implements interventions to prevent them from occurring (APPLICATION).
5. Demonstrates communication techniques that help to alleviate anxiety, fear, and panic and build therapeutic relationship (APPLICATION).

Questions to Prepare for the Simulated Clinical Experience

1. Discuss potential postoperative laparascopic abdominal surgery complications. Include assessment findings, diagnostic evaluation, and nursing measures designed to prevent these complications from occurring.

2. Describe the medical and nursing management for a patient with postoperative ileus?

3. Discuss the symptoms that would occur with the hypo or hyper status of the following electrolytes: Sodium, Potassium, Chloride.

4. Identify the laboratory and radiology tests that would be expected in a patient with an ileus. What can the nurse determine by having the results to these tests?

5. Discuss the pathophysiology of ileus.

6. Differentiate between mechanical and non-mechanical types of bowel obstruction.

7. Discuss the procedure for obtaining orthostatic vital signs. When is this procedure indicated and how are the findings interpreted?

References

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