

Training an Illiterate Patient on Peritoneal Dialysis

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INTRODUCTION

Peritoneal dialysis (PD) requires extensive patient training to perform the dialysis treatments safely and effectively. Patients are trained to prevent infection and to spot signs of infection. This training is key to success on PD.

Purpose: Present a case study of our experience training an illiterate male patient to begin PD

PATIENT INFORMATION

- 76-year-old male patient
- Started in-center hemodialysis in January 2009
- Patient refused permanent peripheral access
 - Prompted discussion of alternative dialysis options and the patient selected PD

TRAINING STEPS and MODIFICATIONS

Initiation of PD Training

- Catheter placement
- Patient scheduled for routine PD training
- Day 1 of PD training:
 - Verbal explanations from nurse to patient
 - Demonstration of exchange procedure by the nurse
- At this point, there was no indication of any literacy issues

Identification of Illiteracy

- Day 2 of PD training:
 - Transitioned to the patient reading the instructions and completing the individual procedure steps
 - Patient then verbalized that he could not read
 - Staff clarified the extent of patient's illiteracy
 - Asked patient to sound out specific words from the procedure guide
- Determined that the use of written materials would be ineffective
 - Staff agreed to revise current plans to meet patient's needs

Revision of Training Plan

Step 1: Utilize pictures

- Photographed each step in the completion of a continuous ambulatory PD (CAPD) exchange (Figure 1)

Step 2: Utilize tape recorder

- Logical and time-effective means of progressing with the patient's dialysis education
- Patient often used tape recorder in other settings
- Created by slowing reading each procedure step with 5 second gap to allow completion of said task

Step 3: Implementation

- CAPD training extended to 3 weeks
- Patient adapted to learning by listening to the tape recorder
- Pictures were not helpful and were discontinued
- Flow sheets modified for proper documentation of vital information

Outcome

- Patient successfully performed own PD since May 2010.
 - One episode of sterile peritonitis; likely due to contamination in ER
- Same training used to transition to nocturnal PD therapy

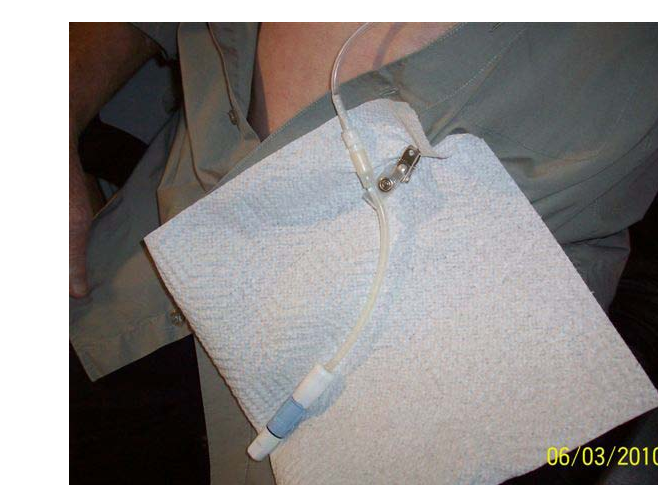


Figure 1. Examples of Photographs from Flip Book

CONCLUSIONS

- Keys to success were due to a combination of:
 - Quick adaptation of training materials
 - Repeated demonstrations
 - Listening to the recorded steps
 - Prolonged training
- Flip chart with step-by-step pictures created for future use (Figure 1)

KEY LEARNINGS

- ✓ Although the patient's illiteracy was initially unknown, patient was successfully trained once the issue was identified.
- ✓ This experience identified barriers and modifications for training so that illiterate patients can be successful on a home therapy.

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