

ABSTRACT FOR A PILOT STUDY OF FLUID REPLACEMENT FOR POST OPERATIVE NAUSEA AND VOMITING (PONV) IN THE PACU

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Purpose

The purpose of this study was to look at the effects fluid replacement assessment would have on the repeat dosing of the antiemetic Ondansetron (Zofran) for the patient experiencing Post-operative nausea and vomiting (PONV) in the Post anesthesia care unit (PACU).

Background

As it is now in our unit, patients receive a prophylactic dose of Zofran in the operating room by the anesthesia care provider. When a patient comes to the PACU and experiences PONV, the PACU nurse may give, by standing order, a second dose or third dose of Zofran. What has been noted is that this second and third dosing of Zofran does not prove to be effective when given as ordered. Many nurses, including myself, found that fluid replacement often helped decrease PONV, particularly when the patient was found to have a fluid deficit on assessment.

Methods

We began with auditing how much Zofran was being used two weeks prior to teaching an in-service on the use of fluid replacement for combating PONV. The class was given a lecture on the basics of hydration physiology and the uses of fluid replacement formulas along with handouts and a post-test measuring their ability to use the fluid replacement formulas. After the in-service, a second audit one-day spot check was done on the use of Zofran in the PACU and we found that there was no significant change in the usage. So, we created a bedside tool that took the need to do the math for the fluid replacement formulas out of the equation. Two weeks after the in-service we did a final audit of the usage of Zofran. The results were a decrease in the use of Zofran.

Results/ Conclusions

This information and data suggests that there is more to evaluate than a one-month trial of using fluid replacement assessment before using a non-efficacious anti-emetic. Teaching PACU nurses to assess fluid status before turning to a standing order involves more than just giving them a tool. I would hope that this study and its results would spark a trend in critical thinking at the bedside that focuses on assessment, instead of following orders that current literature does not support.

Key words: PONV, Zofran, Fluid