

Chest Tube Management

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This EBP project involved investigating the difference between milking, stripping, and not manipulating chest tubes in the post-operative pediatric cardiac patient. The aim of the project was to decrease the routine frequency at which nurses manipulated chest tubes in this patient population. Currently, nurses strip and milk chest tubes, as they feel necessary. Most of the research on this topic is from the 1980s on adult patients. The research states that there were no differences in chest tube output, occlusion rate, and need to return to surgery between the three groups. Baseline data was collected through self-surveys. 90% of UCSF pediatric cardiac nurses watched an educational power point on best practices for chest tube care and a presentation at a monthly staff meeting was done. It was difficult to measure the effectiveness of the interventions due to a low amount follow up surveys. In conclusion, neither stripping, milking or not manipulating chest tubes can be recommended. Presenting RNs with research may change their practice on how frequently they manipulate chest tubes.