Educating Your Patients to Advocate for Themselves in the Dialysis Clinic

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Educating Hemodialysis Patients

“we provide care that is better, faster, and cheaper than what you can provide in the hospital"

Roles of the Access Surgeon

Create the most durable, successful access possible... for the individual patient

- Protect and maintain the access
- Protect the patient

Create the most durable, successful access possible... for the individual patient

- Importance of vessel mapping
  - Arterial and venous

- Champion communication between patient, nephrologist and access surgeon
  - Timing of hemodialysis initiation
  - Consider early cannulation graft in appropriate patients

Protect and maintain the access

1). Arm your patients with information to advocate for themselves.
2). Give them 2 copies of their access diagram
3). Give them written post-op instructions
4). Teach patients cannulation patterns

Disclosures

- Cook Medical
  - Proctor and case reviewer for aortic interventions
- W. L. Gore and Associates
  - Speaker
  - Consultant
- Bectin Dickinson (formerly Bard)
  - Speaker
  - Consultant
- Humacyte
  - Local PI for Humanity Phase II trial
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Protect and maintain the access

1. Tell patients about topical anesthetics for cannulation.
2. Make sure they know what to do in case of an infiltration, prolonged bleeding, or loss of the thrill.
3. Give them your office contact number and after-hours number.
4. Encourage patients to learn how to self-cannulate.

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Better-measured only by safety and durability of interventions, not opinions.

Faster—closed on Wednesdays, some Fridays and the weekend

Cheaper—really only a function of how payers have decided to reimburse. Staff, electricity, and supplies cost the same whether hospital, ASC, or OBL.

Frequently choose therapies that are less effective but cheaper to protect margins (e.g. stent grafts, DCBs)

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Protect the patient

• Educate the patient and their family about their right to chose
• Educate the patient and their family about available providers and facilities in their area
• Educate the patient and their family about services available at different facilities—nephrologists, radiologists, surgeons, anesthesiologists.

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Hemodialysis patients want care that is:

Safe
Effective
Durable

Where that is best achieved will depend on the available resources in a community/region and their commitment to providing excellence in access care.