

REVIEW PAPER

The Role of Nurses in Therapeutic Plasma Exchange Procedure

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Abstract

Introduction: Therapeutic plasma exchange procedure is the treatment of choice for haematological, neurological, kidney and immunological diseases and also as a second choice for other diseases in which the effectiveness has to be established.

Aim: The aim of this literature review was to explore the role of nurse in therapeutic plasma exchange procedure.

Methodology: Literature review based on studies and reviews derived from international (Medline, PubMed, Cinahl, Scopus) and Greek (Iatrotek) data bases concerning the nursing responsibilities in patients undergoing plasmapheresis. The collection of data conducted from January to July 2014. Also, were used some keywords *apheresis, plasmapheresis, clinical responsibilities, education, plasma exchange procedure, role of nurse*, as well as articles by the National Documentation Centre, which provided valid and documented data from global research and epidemiology.

Results: The role of modern nurse in patients undergoing plasmapheresis is multiple and is distinguished in clinical, educational, inquiring and advisory. The apheresis nurse coordinates care in collaboration with other care providers and acts as a patient guide and advocate, assisting the patient in seeking information, assuring that the patient has the opportunity for informed consent for treatment decisions and promoting the maximal level of patient-desired independence. The nephrology - haematology nurse may function in the role as a nurse manager to assure plasmapheresis patient's safety and the delivery of appropriate care within the framework of the nursing process. Also, the plasmapheresis nurse uses assessment findings to prioritize problems according to patient's needs and actively participates in professional role development activities including continuing education, quality assessment and improvement and clinical application of research findings.

Conclusions: The nurse's role in the process of plasmapheresis is very important as the nurse is the one who will direct the patient, coordinate, train, advice, propose changes in care and participate in clinical research.

Key Words: apheresis, plasma exchange procedure, role of nurse, clinical responsibilities, education, research.