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Contact: Liz Dowling
Dowling & Dennis PR
415-388-2794
Liz@dowlingdennis.net

AVA 2023: Standardized Protocols Ensure Patient Safety during Ultrasound-Guided PIV Insertions

Vascular access expert will share methods for probe protection and disinfection that protect patients while improving clinical efficiency

HARTWELL, Georgia. – The upcoming Association for Vascular Access 2023 Annual Scientific Meeting will feature several sessions that highlight patient safety issues related to ultrasound-guided peripheral IV (UGPIV) insertions and explore how standardization can overcome these issues, according to Nancy Moureau, RN, PhD, an internationally recognized expert in vascular access and CEO of [PICC Excellence](#).

“Point-of-care ultrasound is a valuable tool that has been broadly adopted in vascular access and various medical specialties,” said Moureau. “But without appropriate use and cleaning of the equipment, as well as adherence to proper aseptic technique, the risk of potential infections threatens to overshadow the benefits of ultrasound.”

UGPIV Disinfection and Protection

In an exhibitor symposium talk, Moureau and James Thomas, RN, CPEN, will share how a unique sterile barrier and securement dressing ([UltraDrape](#)[®], Parker Labs) standardizes UGPIV procedures and improves patient safety by providing sterile probe protection and separating gel from the insertion site.

Moureau will discuss the development of the innovative dressing, as well as best practices for its adoption and use. Thomas will share his experience with the successful implementation of UltraDrape at a Colorado hospital.

“UltraDrape is amazing – it’s fast, user-friendly and provides a clear barrier between aseptic non-touch technique and the ultrasound gel so that we never even come close to contaminating the IV the way we do with our usual technique,” said Thomas. “Plus the dressing is already secured in place, which decreases the chances of the IV being dislodged – a particularly significant benefit when working with a pediatric population.”

“*UGPIV: The Bottom Line for Disinfection and Protection*” will occur on Monday, October 16, 2023 from 12:30-12:50 pm. The talk is sponsored by Parker Laboratories, a worldwide leader in ultrasound products for more than 60 years. Visit [Parker Laboratories at AVA Booth #708](#).

Moureau will also present a poster, “*Disinfection-Related Transducer Damage: What VA Practitioners Should Know*,” in which she reviews recent changes to the American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicines (AIUM) guidelines about transducer disinfection and examines how

disinfectants not approved by the ultrasound manufacturer can damage transducers. The poster highlights the importance of standardized cleaning and disinfection protocols to keep these devices fully functional, improving clinician efficiency while protecting patient safety.

Variability in Aseptic Technique Threatens Patient Safety

In North America, an estimated 12 million ultrasound-guided PIV insertions are performed each year. Ultrasound is a valuable tool that reduces the number of failed PIV insertion attempts and preserves vessel health, particularly for patients with difficult vascular access (DiVA). However, the presence of the ultrasound probe and gel at the sterile insertion site can increase the risk of infection.

Gel on the skin can contribute to contamination if proper aseptic technique is not used and requires difficult clean up. In addition, any gel left on the skin reduces the adherence to the dressing, increasing the chances of dressing failure.

These risks are heightened if clinicians do not follow safety guidelines for the use of appropriate supplies (i.e., gel and probe protection). Unfortunately, research has shown [significant levels of variation](#) in UGPIV procedures, supplies and application of proper aseptic technique, even between departments within the same hospital.

UltraDrape Minimizes UGPIV Risks

UltraDrape was designed to solve the issues of variability in both supplies and aseptic technique, while also separating the ultrasound probe and gel from the insertion site. It is the first dressing designed specifically for use during ultrasound-guided PIV insertions.

The transparent barrier dressing makes it easier to maintain asepsis during UGPIV procedures by separating both the ultrasound probe and gel from the insertion site. The ultrasound gel is applied to a disposable film layer instead of the patient's skin, resulting in a safer, gel-free insertion. This also eliminates the time-consuming post-procedure clean-up and reduces the risk that inadequate gel removal will lead to dressing failure.

A 2021 evaluation by the Association for Safe Aseptic Practice (ASAP) concluded that UltraDrape makes it easier for clinicians to adhere to the principles of Aseptic Non Touch Technique (ANTT®), now the global standard for safe peripheral intravenous catheter insertions.

“UltraDrape is the only dressing that separates the gel from the insertion site and removes the gel after insertion, while providing sterile probe protection,” Moureau said. “This standardizes UGPIV insertions in a way that makes the procedure safer, faster and more cost-effective, which is a win-win solution for clinicians, patients and the healthcare system as a whole.”

The 2023 AVA Scientific Meeting is scheduled for October 14-17, 2023, in Portland, Ore. AVA attendees can visit [PICC Excellence at Booth #308](#).

About Dr. Nancy Moureau and PICC Excellence

Nancy Moureau, RN, PhD, CRNI, CPUI, VA-BC, is the owner and president of PICC Excellence, a vascular access education and training service for clinicians. She is a member of the Alliance for Vascular Access Teaching and Research Group (AVATAR) based in Australia. Recognized as an international expert in vascular access education and training, she is widely published in the [medical literature](#), including recent [guidelines](#) that defined appropriate

indications for insertion, maintenance, and care of PICCs. PICC Excellence provides effective, easy-to-understand in-person and web-based education and training for clinicians worldwide.

For more information about PICC Excellence, visit www.piccexcellence.com.

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