AORN Position Statement on Preventing Wrong-Patient, Wrong-Site, and Wrong-Procedure Events

POSITION STATEMENT

AORN believes:

- All health care professionals should be dedicated to safe, optimal outcomes for all patients undergoing operative and other invasive procedures.
- There is a need to implement standardized processes developed by safety, regulatory, or accrediting organizations or agencies for the prevention of wrong-patient, wrong-site, and wrong-procedure events.
- Interdisciplinary teams that include perioperative RNs, surgeons, anesthesia professionals, risk managers, and other health care professionals should collaboratively develop procedures and protocols to prevent wrong-patient, wrong-site, and wrong-procedure events.
- Perioperative team members should complete a preoperative checklist that includes, but is not limited to, preprocedure verification, site marking, and time-out procedures.

RATIONALE

Wrong-patient, wrong-site, and wrong-procedure events can and must be prevented. Implementing evidence-based, risk-prevention strategies for the identification and verification of the correct patient, surgical site, and procedure will reduce the risk of error.[1-7]

A comprehensive approach is needed in each health care organization to prevent wrong-patient, wrong-site, and wrong-procedure events. Perioperative RNs are key participants in interdisciplinary teams during the development of procedures and protocols for correct site surgery. As patient advocates, perioperative RNs communicate with all members of the surgical team and other nursing personnel to verify that all components of the standardized process are completed correctly, including but not limited to, preprocedure verification, site marking, and time-out procedures.

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Ariadne Labs. Surgery: WHO Safe Surgery Checklist. https://www.ariadnelabs.org/areas-of-work/safe-surgery-checklist/. Accessed December 2, 2020.

Correct Site Surgery Tool Kit. AORN, Inc. https://www.aorn.org/guidelines/clinical-resources/tool-kits. [Member login required]. Accessed December 2, 2020.

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