

AORN Periop 101: A Core Curriculum™ OR & ASC: Overview, Outcomes, Objectives

Title	Overview	Outcome	Objectives
Anesthesia	Surgical patients can present with significant anxiety prior to an invasive procedure. Patients’ concerns often include apprehension related to anesthesia in addition to the surgical outcomes. This module presents key anesthesia topics to help the perioperative registered nurse (RN) advocate for the patient’s welfare.	The learner will have critical knowledge about anesthesia care to better assist the anesthesia provider in delivering safe patient care.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare and contrast the various types of anesthesia care. 2. Discuss the perioperative RN’s role in assisting with anesthesia care before, during, and after surgery. 3. Identify complications that can arise from anesthetic administration.
Assessment	The assessment is a key component of safe perioperative care. This module addresses how health information obtained during the assessment phase of the nursing process informs the patient’s plan of care. The patient is considered the primary source of their health history. The perioperative registered nurse (RN) can use objective data from various additional sources to confirm the patient’s or patient caregiver’s subjective report.	The learner will have the knowledge and tools to conduct a preoperative interview and a focused assessment for use in clinical practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the importance of the perioperative focused assessment when planning for safe patient care. 2. Identify and relate components of social determinants of health and the impact of those components on the patient presenting for surgery. 3. Describe the effect on anesthesia of over-the-counter medications, alternative therapies, and cannabis and alcohol use.
Endoscopic Surgery	Endoscopic procedures are performed in most surgical specialities. This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with information to deliver safe nursing care to patients undergoing endoscopic surgical procedures in traditional and hybrid OR suites.	The learner will have the knowledge and tools to care for the patient undergoing an endoscopic procedure.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the necessary equipment and safety precautions for the patient undergoing endoscopic surgery. 2. Describe the complexity and maintenance of endoscopic instrumentation. 3. Identify the types of surgical instruments and supplies, video equipment, and distention media used for endoscopic surgeries. 4. Provide an overview of robotic-assisted surgery.

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Environmental Cleaning	Environmental cleaning requires knowledge of cleaning principles and a conscientious team effort between surgical and environmental services personnel. This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with information about the chain of infection, what can be done to break the chain, and the cleaning process.	The learner will be able to identify cleaning requirements within the perioperative environment and implement these into practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the association between surgical site infections and environmental cleaning. 2. Explain the correct environmental cleaning process during turnover (between-patient cleaning). 3. Differentiate between turnover and terminal cleaning.
Health Care Information Management	The nursing process is elemental and instrumental to patient care in all areas. The care given and the evaluation of that care must be documented to provide an ongoing record for comparison of outcomes and evaluation of care. The health care record also serves as a legal document of all health care activity provided to the patient. This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with instruction for documenting care in the patient's medical record.	The learner will be able to apply critical documentation principles when recording patient care in the perioperative setting.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review the necessary components of documentation during the preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative phases of patient care. 2. Identify the benefits that are associated with the electronic health record.
Hemostasis Management	Hemostasis is an intricate physiological process. This module introduces the perioperative registered nurse (RN) to the basics of hemostasis, surgical bleeding and its implications, and methods to achieve hemostasis in the surgical setting.	The learner will have knowledge of the evidence-based, best practices to manage surgical bleeding and will transfer that knowledge into practice in the perioperative setting.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State traditional and adjunct methods of hemostasis that may be used during surgery. 2. Briefly describe the coagulation cascade. 3. Identify types and uses of surgical sponges. 4. Review prevention strategies for a retained surgical sponge. 5. Give examples of the types of wound drains available for use during a surgical procedure.

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Medications	Medication administration is unique in the perioperative setting. Surgeons, anesthesia professionals, other licensed independent practitioners, and registered nurses (RNs) may administer medications to the patient. This module addresses medication safety practices to implement in the perioperative setting with a focus on the intraoperative phase of care.	The learner will have increased knowledge of safe medication practices to implement while caring for a surgical patient.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the roles and responsibilities of the RN in the preparation and administration of medications. 2. State interventions to decrease “near miss” and adverse medication events during each step of the medication use process. 3. Identify best practices for decreasing medication errors using scenario-based examples. 4. Identify commonly used medications in the perioperative setting.
Organizational Influences & Patient Outcomes	A culture of safety starts with communication about errors and near misses without fear of reprisal or accusation. This module introduces the perioperative registered nurse (RN) to the elements of a culture of safety and the effect of human factors on delivery of care.	The learner will have knowledge of organizations that mandate or recommend patient safety initiatives, concepts of a culture of safety, and human factors that can impact the culture of safety and translate that knowledge into practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe elements necessary for a culture of safety. 2. Define human factors that impact the organization’s culture and patient safety. 3. Identify patient safety organizations that influence the policies and procedures of health care facilities.
Patient and Family Education	The perioperative registered nurse (RN) plays an important role in providing patient- and family-centered education to promote patient autonomy and self-care before and after an operative or invasive procedure. This module explores the concepts implemented by accountable care organizations and consideration of social determinants of health; patient-and family-centered care; Enhanced Recovery After Surgery; and health disparity, equity, and equality. Knowledge of these concepts can promote a holistic approach to patient and family educational needs for the improvement of patient outcomes and care delivered and can raise awareness of health care costs.	The learner will have the knowledge needed to provide patient- and family-centered education to decrease recovery time, improve quality of care and patient outcomes, and decrease cost.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss health equity, equality, and social determinants of health. 2. Discuss the common elements hospital personnel follow when they have adopted patient-centered care. 3. Discuss the impact of patient-centered care on patient and family education. 3. Discuss how the concepts of the accountable care organization (ACO), social determinants of health (SDOH), and Enhanced Recovery After Surgery (ERAS) can positively impact quality of care and outcomes.

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Patient Positioning	At a time of increased vulnerability, patients are at risk for positioning injuries during surgery and other invasive procedures. This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with tools to implement safe positioning practices.	The learner will have increased knowledge and clinical skills to provide safe, optimal care during patient positioning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the various surgical positions. 2. Identify the safety considerations and physiological effects of positioning patients in surgical positions. 3. Identify evidence-based practices that can minimize the risk of pressure injury.
Patient Safety	Patient safety issues are complex and widespread. Some improvements have been made since the release of the 1999 landmark report by the Institute of Medicine, <i>To Err Is Human: Building a Safer Health System</i> . Harms caused during health care delivery adversely affect patients in every setting. This module presents the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with evidence-based measures that promote a culture of patient safety, including design of the surgical suite, scrub attire appropriate for each area, effective team communication processes, life safety practices including fire prevention, and prevention of patient falls.	The learner will have knowledge of evidence-based practices to promote patient safety and use the provided tools to transfer that knowledge into practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe elements that promote a culture of safety in the perioperative setting. 2. Explain seven standardized communication techniques that team members can implement to promote patient safety. 3. Identify life safety measures, which include fire prevention practices, to implement in the perioperative setting.
Patient Skin Antisepsis	Microbial transmission to the surgical wound can potentiate a surgical site infection (SSI). This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with a foundation for performing effective patient skin antisepsis and discusses considerations that affect the choice of skin antiseptic products and application methods.	The learner will have knowledge of effective preoperative patient skin antisepsis and application methods to transfer into clinical practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the role of skin antisepsis in the prevention of SSI. 2. Differentiate the features of four commonly used US Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved skin antiseptic products. 3. Identify general measures to take when performing preoperative skin antisepsis. 4. Identify specific skin antisepsis application methods.

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Postanesthesia Care	The intraoperative registered nurse (RN) collaborates with the postanesthesia care unit (PACU) RN in the coordination of postoperative care of the patient undergoing an operative or invasive procedure. This module describes the role of the perianesthesia RN caring for the surgical patient in the Phase I or Phase II PACU.	The learner will have knowledge of the perianesthesia RN's role and responsibilities in the care of the postoperative patient and will apply that knowledge in practice by working collaboratively with the PACU nurse.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the role and responsibilities of the perianesthesia RN. 2. Describe the collaborative relationship between the intraoperative RN and the PACU RN.
Professionalism	The professional registered nurse (RN) is accountable to the patient for their nursing practice. Accountability is based on the standard of care, which incorporates legal and ethical aspects. This module outlines legal and ethical concepts, the significance of the Nurse Practice Act, and an overview of AORN Guidelines.	The learner can integrate the concepts of professionalism into their care of and advocacy for the surgical patient.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Correlate concepts of professionalism to perioperative nursing. 2. Identify resources that perioperative RNs should use in their practice. 3. Identify aspects of professional and personal accountability.
Safe Use of Equipment	Medical equipment (eg, electrosurgery, radiation, laser) that is used to support patient care in surgery can cause patient injury if it is used incorrectly or the equipment is defective. The focus of this module is to educate the perioperative registered nurse (RN) about equipment safety practices in the perioperative setting.	The learner will have knowledge of equipment safety practices to implement into the clinical setting to support safe patient care.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe safe practices for the use of energy-generating devices in surgery. 2. Identify radiation safety practices for perioperative team members and surgical patients. 3. State the importance of following manufacturers' instruction for use for all medical equipment used for patient care.

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Sterile Technique	Sterile technique is the foundation of surgical patient care. This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with concepts specific to the preparation and maintenance of the sterile field and the correct way to cover a sterile field.	The learner will have knowledge of concepts of sterile technique and will be able to put that knowledge into practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the correct technique for sterile field creation. 2. Describe the correct technique for opening sterile items including containers, wrapped packages, and peel-pack items. 3. Name the practices that recognize, address, and correct contamination of the sterile field.
Sterilization Process	Adherence to sterile technique includes the sterilization process. This module introduces the perioperative registered nurse (RN) to the concepts of cleaning, disinfection, sterilization, and storage requirements of sterilized equipment.	The learner will have the knowledge to integrate sterilization principles into practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the steps of the sterilization process. 2. Describe the various sterilization methods. 3. Identify quality assurance measures associated with each step in the instrument cleaning and sterilization process. 4. Describe the perioperative RN's role in identifying sterile items that may be placed on the sterile field.
Surgical Draping	A sterile field must be created and maintained for the protection of the patient undergoing a surgical or invasive procedure. This module provides evidence-based practices and basic principles of surgical draping for the perioperative registered nurse (RN) to implement during operative and other invasive procedures.	The learner will have knowledge of common surgical drapes, their uses, and essential principles in the draping procedure.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify five different surgical drapes and their uses. 2. Describe the basic principles of surgical draping in operative and procedural clinical settings.
Surgical Hand Antisepsis and Scrub Attire	Correct performance of surgical hand antisepsis and use of sterile technique when gowning and gloving are essential to creating and maintaining the sterile field. This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with the foundations of hand hygiene, surgical hand antisepsis, and the wearing of appropriate surgical scrub attire.	The learner will have the knowledge to perform surgical hand antisepsis and to gown and glove using sterile technique for operative and other invasive procedures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the evidence-based practices to perform for effective surgical hand antisepsis. 2. Describe how to gown and glove using sterile technique.

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Surgical Instruments	Surgical instruments are the tools used during a surgical or invasive procedure. Recognizing the name and intended use of an instrument promotes a better understanding of the surgical process. This module provides the learner with a foundational knowledge of surgical tools, major instrument categories, and important considerations for instrument trays and specialty surgical instruments.	The learner will have knowledge of common surgical instruments and their use in practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify instruments and the instrument category to which they belong. 2. Describe instrument set assembly considerations, such as type of surgery and patient population.
Surgical Specimens	Specimen collection and handling are critical components of patient care. Pathology reports affect a patient's prognosis and plan of care. This module provides the perioperative registered nurse (RN) with information on the necessity of timely and accurate team communication and the collection, handling, and transport of a specimen.	The perioperative RN will have the knowledge to properly collect and correctly handle a specimen that is a critical element of the patient's plan of care and outcome.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe how to retrieve a specimen from the field, correctly label each specimen, and deliver the specimen to the desired location. 2. Identify how to document a specimen in the health care record. 3. Differentiate between frozen, fresh, and permanent specimen orders.
Transmissible Infection Prevention	Protecting patients and personnel from transmission of potentially infectious agents continues to be a primary focus for the perioperative registered nurse (RN). This module introduces the principles and practices of standard and transmission-based precautions.	The learner will have the knowledge to implement standard and transmission-based precautions for the safety of the patient and themselves.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the elements in the chain of infection. 2. Describe the components of standard and transmission-based practices.
Wound Closure and Healing	Many elements affect a successful wound closure and subsequent wound healing. This module introduces the perioperative registered nurse (RN) to the basic elements of wound healing and provides an overview of suture, needles, stitches, and other skin closure options.	The learner will have knowledge regarding the interrelated processes of wound closure and wound healing and translate that knowledge into practice.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List suture elements such as suture material, characteristics, and packaging. 2. Classify a surgical wound. 3. Identify skin closure options. 4. Explain wound healing influences and criteria for surgical site infection types.

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ASC Preoperative Care	Preoperative care in the ambulatory setting requires a thorough and efficient implementation of the nursing process. This module introduces the perioperative registered nurse (RN) to the essential activities of patient-centered assessment and education in the preoperative environment.	The learner will have an increased knowledge of the assessment, education, and communication needs required for the patient and their support system and integrate that knowledge into practice in the ambulatory preoperative setting.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe elements of preoperative patient and family education. 2. Identify evaluation components of the patient's knowledge of the surgical experience.
ASC Postoperative Care	Postoperative care in the ambulatory setting involves different levels of patient care. This module introduces the perioperative registered nurse (RN) to the different phases of postoperative patient care and the need for thorough communication hand overs between caregivers.	The learner will have increased knowledge of the different postoperative phases and levels of patient care and incorporate that knowledge into practice. The learner will be able to integrate knowledge about discharge teaching and the teach-back method for essential patient and family understanding.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the differences between the phases of postoperative patient care. 2. Describe the importance of the patient discharge and the need for patient and family education.