

The nursing view about the cannulation techniques in haemodialysis

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Introduction

One of the most important renal nursing procedures is the cannulation of a vascular access (VA), which is carried out on numerous occasions. Selection of the correct technique is a fundamental factor for an optimal dialysis session and the long-term VA survival. Some recent observational studies confirm the importance of the VA nursing care, but few report the case from a nurse's perspective.

Objectives

To determine the nurses' viewpoint about the importance of cannulation techniques in VA care.

Methods

A qualitative, exploratory research was performed, in our haemodialysis centre using a semi-structured interview of the nurses:

- Who can decide about the cannulation technique?
- Which technique presents the largest advantage for patients and professionals?
- What is the most difficult technique to perform and why?
- What are the key areas for the maintenance of the vascular access for you?
- Can the preference of healthcare professionals for a certain technique influence positive outcomes?

Results

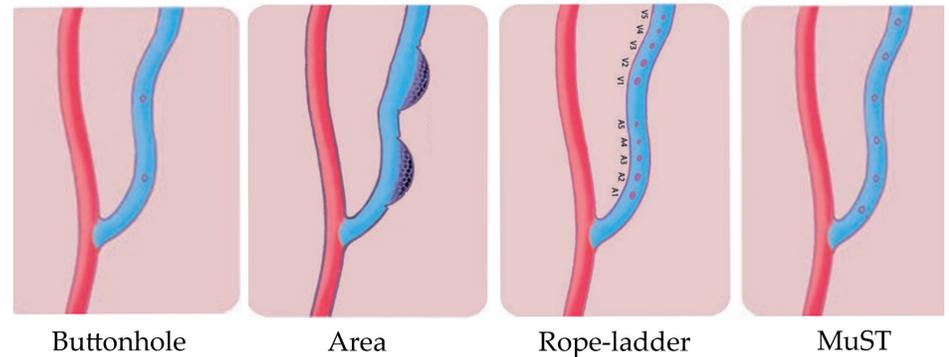
The interviews were conducted by the head nurse of the unit. All interviews were audio recorded and involved 20 nurses, approximately 80% of the nursing team. The general outcome of the study was that the cannulation technique is the main nursing procedure in VA care. The key areas that nurses reported was the formation of the VA, choice of technique, monitoring of the VA, education of the patient about VA care. The majority of the nurses reported that MuST is the technique presenting the largest advantages for patients and professionals. One nurse defined MuST technique as the "rope-ladder with precise steps". Some nurses said that the buttonhole technique had same advantages for patients due to less haematoma and pain. The most difficult techniques to perform were buttonhole and rope-ladder, the first because of the "high number of steps" to cannulation and the "remove of the scab". The second due to "fear of failure" and for some nurses "with MuST technique we don't need rope-ladder". For this reason, the majority of the nurses agree with the association of the cannulation technique with the characteristic of the VA. All nurses consider themselves to be the most qualified professional to make the choice of the technique which will have a positive outcome for the patients.

Conclusion

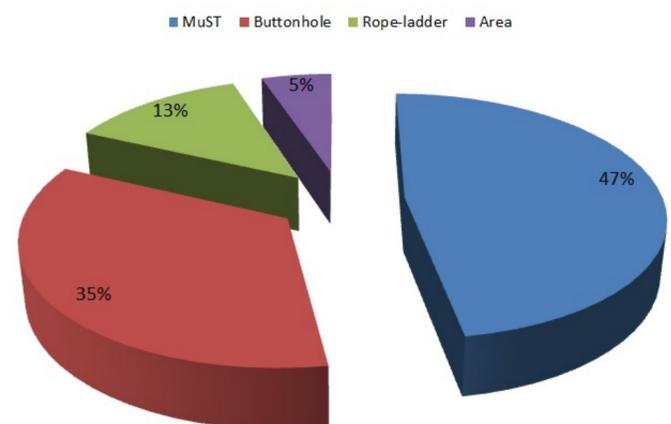
On the basis of this exploratory study we can say that nurses know both the major advantages and disadvantages of the different cannulation techniques. We also observed that nurses are well informed about vascular access care. They know the advantages of the techniques and associate these advantages with the characteristics of vascular access. They reported the key areas of vascular access care to be training, surveillance, and patient education. Nurses recognise difficulties in the cannulation process, admit they have preferred techniques and that this may influence their decision in the choice of the technique. But they also say that the decision is taken in a multidisciplinary team with the goal of associating the best cannulation technique for each vascular access.

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Vascular access cannulation techniques



Graph 1 - Distribution of the cannulation techniques in NephroCare Viseu