

Exploring Maternal Perceptions and Utilization of Peripheral Intravenous Access during the Postpartum Period in Pediatric and Child Health

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ABSTRACT

The postpartum period is one of the most delicate phases in maternal healthcare, requiring careful monitoring and timely medical support. Peripheral intravenous (IV) access is commonly used after childbirth to administer medications, fluids, antibiotics, and emergency treatment when necessary. Although IV access is considered a routine clinical procedure, women's perceptions and experiences regarding its use during postpartum recovery are often overlooked. In low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), healthcare limitations, communication barriers, and resource shortages may influence maternal satisfaction and healthcare outcomes. Understanding maternal perspectives can help improve respectful maternity care and strengthen postpartum healthcare practices. This article explores maternal perceptions, the importance of IV utilization during postpartum care, associated challenges, and opportunities for improving maternal-centered healthcare delivery.

Keywords: Postpartum Care; Maternal Perceptions; Peripheral Intravenous Access; Maternal Health, Postpartum Recovery; Low- And Middle-Income Countries; Patient-Centered Care

INTRODUCTION

Childbirth is a life-changing experience that involves both physical and emotional transitions for women. The postpartum period, which begins immediately after delivery, is especially important because mothers remain vulnerable to complications such as hemorrhage, infection, dehydration, and hypertension. Healthcare providers often use peripheral intravenous access during this period to ensure rapid administration of medications and fluids whenever required.

In many hospitals, IV annulations is routinely performed during labor and maintained for several hours after childbirth. While this practice supports emergency preparedness, women may experience discomfort, restricted movement, anxiety, or fear associated with IV use. Some mothers view intravenous access as a source of safety and reassurance, whereas others consider it unnecessary if they are recovering normally.

Maternal perceptions toward medical procedures play a major role in healthcare satisfaction and trust in healthcare systems. In low-resource healthcare settings, lack of communication and limited patient education may further affect women's understanding of postpartum IV care. Therefore, exploring maternal experiences is essential for improving healthcare quality and promoting respectful maternity services.

Concept Description

Importance of Peripheral Intravenous Access after Childbirth

Peripheral IV access is an essential component of postpartum healthcare. It allows healthcare professionals to administer intravenous fluids, pain medications, antibiotics, blood transfusions, and life-saving emergency treatments without delay. In situations such as postpartum hemorrhage, quick vascular access can significantly reduce maternal mortality and complications.

For healthcare providers, maintaining IV access after delivery offers preparedness for unexpected emergencies. However, not every postpartum woman may require prolonged IV therapy, especially after uncomplicated deliveries. This raises important questions regarding routine IV practices and individualized maternal care.

Maternal Perceptions and Emotional Experiences

Women's feelings about postpartum IV access are influenced by several factors, including previous childbirth experiences, cultural beliefs, and communication with healthcare workers, and overall quality of care. Some mothers appreciate IV access because it creates a sense of medical security and immediate

support. Others may feel uncomfortable due to pain during insertion, swelling, restricted hand movement, or difficulty caring for the newborn while connected to IV lines.

Emotional support and proper explanation from healthcare staff greatly affect maternal experiences. Women who understand why IV access is necessary are more likely to feel comfortable and cooperative during treatment. In contrast, poor communication may create confusion, fear, and dissatisfaction.

For first-time mothers, anxiety regarding medical procedures may be even greater. Compassionate counseling and respectful interaction can therefore improve confidence and reduce emotional stress during postpartum recovery.

Challenges in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

Healthcare systems in many LMICs continue to face shortages of medical supplies, overcrowded maternity wards, and limited healthcare personnel. These conditions may affect the quality of IV care and patient monitoring. In some facilities, IV cannulas may remain in place longer than clinically necessary due to staffing limitations or lack of standardized guidelines.

Improper IV maintenance may increase the risk of complications such as infections, phlebitis, infiltration, and patient discomfort. Additionally, inadequate patient education may leave mothers unaware of potential side effects or the purpose of continued IV therapy.

Financial limitations can also influence healthcare access. Many women in resource-limited settings may delay seeking institutional postpartum care because of treatment costs, transportation difficulties, or social barriers. Improving maternal healthcare requires not only medical resources but also patient-centered communication and equitable healthcare access.

Need for Respectful Maternal Care

Modern maternal healthcare should prioritize both clinical safety and emotional well-being. Respectful maternity care involves informed consent, dignity, privacy, effective communication, and emotional support throughout childbirth and postpartum recovery.

Healthcare providers should involve mothers in decisions related to IV use whenever possible. Explaining the benefits, duration, and possible discomfort associated with IV therapy helps women feel respected and informed. Personalized postpartum care plans may also reduce unnecessary procedures and improve patient satisfaction.

Training healthcare workers in compassionate communication and evidence-based postpartum practices can strengthen trust between mothers and healthcare professionals.

CONCLUSION

Peripheral intravenous access plays a valuable role in postpartum healthcare by supporting emergency preparedness and timely medical treatment. However, maternal perceptions and experiences regarding IV utilization should not be overlooked. Women's emotional comfort, understanding, and satisfaction are important aspects of quality maternal care.

In low- and middle-income countries, healthcare challenges such as limited resources, overcrowding, and communication barriers may affect postpartum IV practices and maternal experiences. Improving patient education, strengthening respectful maternity care, and promoting evidence-based clinical protocols can enhance both healthcare outcomes and maternal well-being.

A patient-centered approach that values women's voices and experiences can contribute to safer, more compassionate, and more effective postpartum healthcare systems worldwide.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest related to this article.

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