

Comfort Cart: The Use of Non-pharmacological Adjuncts for Pain Relief



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Background

Pain is identified as the most common symptom to prompt an emergency department visit. Literature review revealed a small number of non-pharmacological approaches, yet with a worsening opioid epidemic, something new is needed to address pain in the ED.

Clinical Question

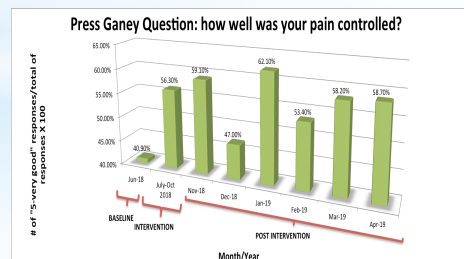
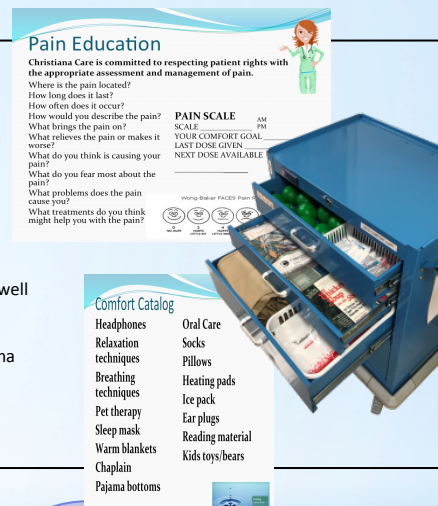
Will use of non-pharmacological adjuncts in the ED improve patient pain control?

Methods

- Setting: Urban level 3 trauma center
- Sample size, N= All ED patients, no exclusions
- Nurse and tech education regarding types of pain and non-pharmacological interventions
- Cart procurement & setup
- Introduce staff to cart and begin use

Strategic Interventions

- Team of nurses and techs reviewed Press Ganey scores, discussed need for improved patient pain control, determined need for enhanced patient comfort, discussed a cart to hold various items of comfort, identified items to be ordered
- Pain Presentation PPT created and added to Mandatory Quarterly Education for nursing and technical staff (all required to attend)
- RNs were educated on effective non-pharmacological pain management, including:
 - use of the appropriate pain assessment tool as needed based on the patient's plan of care for pain
 - Taught how to provide education to patients and families regarding their roles in managing their pain as well as the potential limitations and side effects of pain treatments when appropriate
- Contents of cart created/researched/stocked for ideal comfort adjuncts
- Cart items included: ice packs, stress balls, sleep masks, magazines, headphones, lip balm, card games, pajama bottoms, guided imagery, coloring books, hot packs, pet therapy, oral care and aromatherapy
- Cart stationed at a designated area in the main ED core
- "Comfort Catalog" designed for patient to identify and utilize cart items
- RNs & techs encouraged to offer Comfort Catalog to patients during their hourly rounding and prn



Press Ganey Patient Satisfaction score for "how well was your pain controlled" improved significantly from 40.9 in June 2018 to 58.7 in April 2019

Results

Conclusion

Non-pharmacological adjuncts for pain enhance and improve pain control for patients who report pain in the ED setting

Use of non-pharmacological adjuncts should be routinely adopted into ED practice

Implications for Practice