Encouraging Preoperative Warming

The problem: patients who undergo surgery are exposed to an environment which puts them at risk for hypothermia (Austin et al., 2013). Hypothermia in the perioperative period causes complications such as infection, increased oxygen demands for the patient, a slower metabolism of medications, and decreased tissue perfusion (Fettes, Mulvaine, Van Doren, 2013). As these issues go unaddressed they elongate the period of recovery and increase the cost of treating the patient by $2,500 to $7,000 (Austin et al., 2013).

The significance: hypothermia may be prevented by an active approach of ensuring the patient is kept warm throughout a surgery. Providing warming blankets and being mindful of the temperatures and exposure patients have during an operation have shown to reduce the risk for hypothermia and related complications (Austin et al., 2013). However, many hospitals do not actively ensure patient warming in procedures (Fettes, Mulvaine, Van Doren, 2013). Implementation of measures to warm patients prior to surgery is an effective way of reducing the risk of perioperative complications of hypothermia.
ENCOURAGING PREOPERATIVE WARMING

References


