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Reducing Diaper Dermatitis in the NICU

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REDUCING DIAPER DERMATITIS IN THE NICU

Abstract

Purpose: This evidence-based project aims to support the acquisition of diaper dermatitis protocols that include nursing interventions, assessment tools, and educational opportunities for NICU nurses. Neonatal diaper dermatitis cases are common in the NICU due to the skin of neonates often being underdeveloped and sensitive to the environment. Diapers, especially, can irritate the perineal skin of neonates. Nurses who do not comply with standard perineal skin care can compromise the neonate's skin integrity. This can cause diaper dermatitis, which, if left untreated, can pose a risk of infection and cause pain to the neonate. **Literature review:** The review of this project was based on four main sources retrieved from the KSU Library database. A total of 44 articles were reviewed. Of these, five were deemed relevant. Several studies support the use of pH-appropriate wipes and diaper barrier creams as they reduce the occurrence of diaper dermatitis. Others have found the use of a diaper dermatitis scale beneficial in determining the skin injury level and corresponding interventions. **Methods:** Examples of evidence-based interventions that will be used are educational seminars, a diaper dermatitis scale, zinc oxide barrier cream, petroleum jelly, pH-neutral wipes, eight or more diaper changes, and routine nurse compliance checks. **Proposed Project:** The significance of this project was identified during clinical and shadow shifts. I observed nursing care provided to three neonates. Two of the patients experienced early stages of diaper dermatitis. The nurse performed perineal care using soap, water, and a 4x4 cotton pad. The neonate's diaper dermatitis worsened throughout the shift. **Evaluation:** Evaluation of this EBP initiative's success will include comparing diaper dermatitis cases, diaper dermatitis cases with the use of standard care, and diaper dermatitis cases with the use of an enhanced skin care protocol and diaper dermatitis scale. Nurse compliance to new interventions will also be assessed.

Keywords: diaper dermatitis, NICU patients, skin protocol, neonates, diaper changes, improvements