



Background

- Increase awareness of signs and symptoms of atypical chest pain, especially in correlation to women.
- The sample size was n:15, which included RN's with both Associates and Bachelor's degrees on Penobscot Pavilion 6, Cardiac Telemetry.
- An accurate and precise cardiac assessment is a vital part of patient care, especially since there is a vast amount of different manifestations a patient could have that indicate acute coronary syndrome (American Heart Association, 2017).
- Various literatures recommend that there are presentational differences between males and females with acute coronary syndrome, so now it is more important than ever for exceptional cardiac assessments to occur (O'Donnell, S., G., O'Brien, F., Mooney, M., & Moser, D.K., 2012).

Practice Change

Increase registered nurse's (RN's) knowledge and improve assessment of signs and symptoms of atypical chest pain, to promote better patient outcomes.

Methods

- Administer anonymous pre-test to RN's.
- Provide handouts with educational content.
- Administered anonymous post-test to RN's.

Results (n=15)



	Associate's	Bachelor's	Master's
RN	33%	67%	0%

	0-1	2-5	6-10	>10
Years of licensure	33%	33%	13%	20%

How much do you know about identifying cardiac signs and symptoms in women?

Assessment	Pre-Test			Post-Test		Improved Assessment
Differentiate cardiac assessment between males and females	Yes: 60%	No: 33%	N/A: <1%	Yes: 67%	No: 33%	7%
Skin	80%			80%		0%
Pain	100%			100%		0%
Auscultation of Heart	100%			100%		0%
Auscultation of Lungs	87%			93%		6%
Pulses	100%			100%		0%
Vital Signs	100%			100%		0%
Capillary Refill	100%			100%		0%
Mentation Status	67%			93%		26%
Fluid Status	87%			87%		0%
JVD	87%			87%		0%
Rhythm Analysis	100%			100%		0%
Jaw Pain	80%			100%		20%
Back Pain	93%			100%		7%
Abdominal Discomfort	80%			93%		13%
Nausea/ Vomiting	80%			93%		13%
Lightheadedness	67%			87%		20%
Cold Sweats	67%			87%		20%
Extreme Fatigue	87%			93%		6%
Shortness of Breath	60%			80%		20%
Arm Pain	80%			93%		13%
Flu-like Symptoms	60%			80%		20%

Summary

- To conduct the study, the materials were created. In an effort to ensure consistency, the following was done:
 - Implement the pre-test, education, and post-test.
 - Ensure that the post-test was consistent with the pre-test. This included consistency in nurses.
 - Evaluate the improvement of assessment for atypical chest pain.
- Additional assessment comments:
 - "Previous cardiac event symptoms."
 - "Does anything seem unusual."
 - "Females may have discomfort in other areas, these atypical symptoms are more common in females as opposed to males."

Conclusion

- By increasing awareness, recognizing signs and symptoms of atypical chest pain can be enhanced, and therefore will result in better patient outcomes.
- The atypical chest pain signs and symptoms assessment increased 6-26% post-teaching.
- The study would have been more effective if the sample size had been larger.

References:

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