

ARTIFICIAL NUTRITION IN NURSING CARE: PRINCIPLES AND BEST PRACTICES

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Abstract: Artificial nutrition is a critical aspect of nursing care, ensuring that patients who cannot eat normally receive adequate nutrients. This paper explores the types of artificial nutrition, indications, nursing responsibilities, and ethical considerations. Evidence-based practices and multidisciplinary collaboration are highlighted to improve patient outcomes.

Keywords: Enteral Nutrition (EN), gastrointestinal (GI),

Introduction

Proper nutrition is essential for recovery and overall health. However, certain medical conditions require artificial feeding methods such as enteral and parenteral nutrition. Nurses play a key role in administering, monitoring, and educating patients about artificial nutrition. This paper examines the principles and best practices of artificial nutrition in nursing care.

Types of Artificial Nutrition

1. Enteral Nutrition (EN)

- Delivered via a tube into the gastrointestinal (GI) tract (e.g., nasogastric, gastrostomy, or jejunostomy tubes).
- Indicated for patients with dysphagia, neurological disorders, or postsurgical conditions.
- Advantages: Maintains gut integrity, reduces infection risk compared to parenteral nutrition.



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• Complications: Aspiration, tube blockage, diarrhea.

2. Parenteral Nutrition (PN)

- Administered intravenously when the GI tract is non-functional.
- Indicated for patients with severe malabsorption, bowel obstruction, or critical illness.
- Requires careful monitoring of electrolytes, glucose levels, and infection risks.

Nursing Responsibilities

- Assessment and Monitoring: Checking for signs of malnutrition, weight loss, and hydration status.
- **Tube Placement and Care**: Ensuring correct positioning and preventing complications.
- **Preventing Complications**: Monitoring for aspiration, infections, and metabolic imbalances.
- Patient and Family Education: Teaching about home-based artificial nutrition if required.

Ethical Considerations

- Patient Autonomy: Respecting patient wishes regarding artificial feeding.
- Quality of Life: Evaluating whether artificial nutrition aligns with the patient's prognosis and comfort.
- Legal and Ethical Guidelines: Following institutional protocols and ethical standards in end-of-life care.

Conclusion

Artificial nutrition is a vital nursing intervention for patients unable to consume food normally. Enteral and parenteral nutrition require careful administration, monitoring, and ethical considerations. Evidence-based nursing practices improve patient safety and quality of care.



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