

38th International Conference on

NURSING & HEALTHCARE

October 16-18, 2017 | New York, USA

Nursing care in the epilepsy monitoring unit and the role of peri-ictal nursing interventions in the setting of convulsive seizures

Sandra Rose

University of Chicago Medicine, USA

Given the complexities and potential complications of seizures, nursing care of patients with epilepsy often requires a higher level of care than the general population. The complexity and acuity of care required for epilepsy patients is rarely more crucial than in the epilepsy monitoring unit, where the goal of patient care is frequently to capture multiple seizures and where seizure induction methods are frequently employed to ensure seizures are captured. In this setting, maintaining strict seizure precautions and close vigilance for clinical signs of even subtle seizure activity can be critical to preventing prolonged seizures, status epilepticus, physical trauma, or medical complications to the patient. Additionally, emerging evidence suggests that peri-ictal nursing interventions can shorten the duration of postictal generalized EEG suppression (PGES) after convulsive seizures. Given that PGES has been shown to be a marker of increased risk for sudden unexpected death in epilepsy (SUDEP), these interventions may be helpful in mitigating risk for SUDEP.

srose1@neurology.bsd.uchicago.edu

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