

Section: Division of Nursing *****
Approval: Reamer RN, BSN, CRNA * PROCEDURE * *****

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HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER

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Minor Procedure
(Scope)

TITLE: ARGON PLASMA COAGULATION (APC)

PURPOSE: To outline the nursing care of the patient needing Argon Plasma Coagulation (APC)

SUPPORTIVE DATA:

1. APC is a non-contact, monopolar electrosurgical unit that ionizes a stream of argon gas for hemostasis and tissue devitalization of tumors, scar stenosis and anastomosis and prior to fistula closure.
2. Contraindicated in uncooperative patient, patient with massive hemorrhage requiring immediate surgery and inability to visualize probe tip

EQUIPMENT LIST:

1. Erbe APC unit
2. Erbe gas and electric probe hose
3. Erbe endoscopic APC probe of appropriate size
4. Erbe APC membrane filter (prevents liquids and bacteria from entering the APC unit and also protects the patient against liquids and bacteria)
5. Patient return electrode
6. Endoscope

CONTENT:

PROCEDURE STEPS:

KEY POINTS:

Pre-Procedure

1. Prepare patient for Endoscopy. (See Endoscopy procedure.)
2. Explain presence of patient return electrode and purpose of procedure
3. Place fresh return electrode pad on a muscular area including the flank, anterior thigh and upper arm
4. Avoid patient contact with metal side rails or other metal objects during use
5. Deactivate AICD by trained practitioner prior to APC use
6. Instruct patient on importance of lying as still as possible during the procedure

Potential Complications:

- a. thermal injury to patient
- b. hemorrhage
- c. perforation
- d. transmural burns
- e. explosion

Intra-Procedure

1. Follow appropriate endoscopic procedure
2. Turn on Erbe unit
3. Ground patient – place return electrode pad on patient but do not plug into Erbe yet
4. Attach membrane filter to APC unit
5. Attach probe hose (both gas and electric)
6. Plug in tester (on string attached to probe hose)
7. Choose appropriate procedure (i.e. "APC stomach") from menu by scrolling down with arrows
8. Press black button on foot pedal for set up information or press "adopt program" on Erbe unit. Position foot pedal for physician use.

9. When ready for probe, attach to end of probe hose.
10. Purge hose and probe.
11. Test probe with tester (hold probe close to tester, press blue pedal)
12. Replace tester with return electrode plug
13. Insert probe in scope
14. When probe is in view, purge again. Re-purge if necessary.
15. Re-purge after each insertion into the scope
16. Dispose of filter and probe after each patient use
17. Process probe hose for cleaning
18. Document power settings
19. Monitor patient for distention

DOCUMENTATION:

Document the following:

1. APC power settings
2. Skin integrity at return electrode site
3. Patient tolerance of procedure
4. Patient teaching
5. Deactivation/reactivation of AICD by trained practitioner

Reference:

Manual of Gastrointestinal Procedure, 5th Edition © 2004 by the Society of Gastroenterology Nurses and Associates, Inc.
Erbe "Hot Topics" – Current information for Clinicians Dispersive Electrodes: Who What Where?
Erbe Membrane Filter Package Insert