

PACU PROCEDURE

CATEGORY: Program Specific
ISSUE DATE: May 11, 2012
SUBJECT: **BAIR HUGGER TEMPERATURE
MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

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PURPOSE

To ensure the proper use of the Bair Hugger™ temperature management system to warm patients.

PROCEDURE

Equipment

- Bair Hugger™ unit with hose or Bair Paw™ unit with hose
- Bair Hugger™ blanket or Bair Paw™ gown
- Monitoring equipment for blood pressure, pulse and SpO₂
- Exergen temporal thermometer or other appropriate tool for measuring core temperature

Special Instructions

- The Bair Hugger™ system is a convective warming device which transfers heat to patients with the intent to prevent and treat hypothermia (core temperature less than 36°C). The system can also be used to provide adult and pediatric patient thermal comfort when conditions exist that may cause a patient to become too cold.
- **The system is not to be used in areas where patients with poor perfusion or decreased sensation are unmonitored during prolonged warming therapy sessions. Thermal injury may result.**
- Bair Hugger™ blankets are single patient use only.
- Prevention of unintended perianesthesia hypothermia and promotion of normothermia are key priorities in the prevention of surgical site infections (SSI), decreasing hospital length of stay and lowering mortality rates. Monitoring core temperature and maintaining normothermia in the anesthesia phase is standard practice and is recommended standard practice throughout all other perianesthesia phases.

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Method

1. Identify the patient and explain the procedure to the patient/parent/guardian.
2. Ensure the patient is dry.
3. Ensure that the temperature management unit is safely placed on a hard surface or securely mounted to a bedrail or IV pole prior to initiating therapy. If mounting the unit to an IV pole, clamp the unit no higher than 110 cm from the floor and on an IV pole with a minimum 70 cm diameter wheelbase. Failure to do so may result in the IV pole tipping and injury to the patient.
4. Place the blanket or gown on the patient with the perforated side against the patient's skin. **Do not** place over transdermal medication, as increased drug delivery may occur.
5. Insert the unit hose in the hose port on the blanket or gown using a twisting motion to ensure a snug fit. **Do not** warm patients with the hose alone, as thermal injury may result.
6. Turn the unit ON and select the appropriate temperature setting. If the over-temp indicator light illuminates and the alarm sounds, discontinue therapy and contact Biomedical Engineering for service. Air temperatures reaching the patient are approximately 2°C lower than the listed temperatures.
7. Lightly place a cotton blanket over the Bair Hugger™ blanket or gown for maximum effectiveness.
8. Documentation must include:
 - A. Temperature - preoperatively, upon admission to the PACU, and Q15 minutes while the Bair Hugger™ is in use and at discharge from the PACU.
 - B. Skin assessments - at initiation of active warming and periodically during and after completion of therapy. It should be noted that the patient's skin is free from redness or burns.
 - C. Other warming interventions (such as warmed fluids)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Definitions

1. Unintended Perianesthesia Hypothermia: A core temperature of less than 36°C resulting from the effects of actions and preparations required for surgery and/or anesthesia.

Education/Training Related Information

Nurses must complete the "Thermoregulation for PACU" self-learning package prior to using the Bair Hugger™ temperature management system.

References and Related Documents

Bair Hugger™ Model 750 Warming Unit Operator's manual. (2013)

Hooper VD, Andrews JO. Accuracy of noninvasive core temperature measurement in acutely ill adults: the state of the science. Biol Res Nurs. 2006;8 (1):24-34

Hooper VD, Chard R, Clifford T, et al. ASPAN's evidence-based clinical practice guideline for the promotion of perioperative normothermia: second edition. J PeriAnesth Nurs. 2010;25 (6):346-365

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