



Arizona State Board of Nursing

1740 W Adams Street, Suite 2000
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Phone (602) 771-7800
Home Page: www.azbn.gov

An advisory opinion adopted by AZBN is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion of AZBN regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the functions of nursing. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training, and supervision to assure the safety of their patient population and or decrease risk.

**OPINION: ADMINISTRATION of tPA
and DNase via Pigtail or Chest Tube**
APPROVED: 11/2019 NOT APPROVED:
REVISED DATE
ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:
SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE

Within the Scope of Practice of X RN LPN

Advisory Opinion: Administration of Intrapleural Medications

STATEMENT OF SCOPE

It is within the Scope of Practice of a Registered Nurse (RN) to administer medications through a pleural catheter such as a pigtail or small chest tube (e.g. <15Fr) for the purpose of pleural effusion or empyema.

Chemotherapy & sclerotic agents (e.g. doxycycline, talc) are NOT covered by this Advisory Opinion.

I. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. Written policies/procedures are maintained by the agency/ employer.
- B. Only RNs who have satisfactorily completed an agency's instructional program, and have had supervised clinical practice are allowed to perform intrapleural administration of medication.
- C. Documentation of satisfactory completion of the instructional program and supervised practice is on file with the employer.

II. COURSE OF INSTRUCTION

- A. Prior to performing this procedure, the RN must complete education, which includes but is not limited to:
 - i. Anatomy and physiology of the lungs, pleural space, and the area involving the chest tube device
 - ii. Indications and contraindications for procedure
 - iii. Chest tube devices, including placement, monitoring, complications, and appropriate nursing interventions
 - iv. Techniques and use of equipment used during the procedure
 - v. Pharmacological indications, contraindications, complications of the medications being administered, and appropriate nursing interventions

- vi. Nursing care responsibilities including patient monitoring, assessment of vital signs, and focused assessment of respiratory status
 - vii. Potential adverse reactions and complications, including emergencies such as catheter dislodgement, air embolus, bleeding, or other serious complication
 - viii. Consent
 - ix. Patient education
 - x. Documentation
- B. Upon completion of education, and prior to independent practice, the RN must have documented supervised clinical practice

III. RATIONALE

To avoid the invasive surgical procedures historically used to treat pleural effusion/empyema, recent studies have indicated that intrapleural instillation of tPA and DNase through a pleural catheter (e.g. pigtail or chest tube) is an alternative treatment. This therapy includes a series of steps including instillation of medication, followed by dwell time and drainage. Evacuation of contents is a successful outcome of this therapy.

Several boards of nursing (including Arizona) have indicated that an RN with appropriate training and competency can administer analgesia via the intrapleural route.

IV. REFERENCES

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