Did you know that approximately 42,000 adults in the U.S. alone die from vaccine-preventable diseases every year? While some diseases have been eradicated in certain parts of the world, they are still prevalent in some cases. Evidence is clear that vaccination is an effective way to ensure that vaccine-preventable diseases don’t pop up in parts of the world where they have been eliminated. In addition to preventing illness, it results in the overall cost of medical care at a significant rate by decreasing the number of days lost from work due to vaccine-preventable illness.

Administering vaccinations is a common part of many nurses’ day-to-day tasks, but nurses’ skill levels can vary. Check out the Dynamic Health™ competency checklist below to see if your nurses are checking all the boxes when it comes to administering vaccinations in adults.

**PRE-PROCEDURE STEPS**

1. Review the facility/unit protocol for administering immunizations to adults, if one is available.
2. Review the treating clinician’s order for immunization.
3. Note the type and dose of vaccine ordered and route of administration.
4. Review the patient’s medical history/medical record.
5. Follow standard pre-procedure steps.
6. Verify the “rights” of medication administration. See medication administration “rights.”

**PROCEDURE STEPS**

1. Assist the patient into a comfortable position that allows easy access to the area of the body where the immunization will be administered.
2. Use an alcohol swab or facility-approved antiseptic to clean the injection site using a circular motion.
3. Allow the site to air-dry.
4. Uncap the syringe.
5. Use techniques to promote effective vaccine delivery in target tissue, minimize injection site pain, and reduce risk for local reactions.
6. Use I.M. administration for most vaccinations.
7. Use Z-track injection if appropriate.
8. Use proper skin disinfection method in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
9. Tilt the appropriate needle length from the vaccine to the administration site.
10. Use an injection site that is pliable, and wash the site with soap and water to make it skin-safe.
11. Position the needle at a 90° angle to the surface of the injection site and pierce the patient’s skin with the needle using a smooth, rapid motion.
12. Push the plunger.
13. Gently withdraw the needle using the same track as for injection, and release the skin to its normal position.
14. Cover the injection site with a bandage.
15. Do not massage the skin or muscle tissue at the site of the injection because doing so can irritate the muscle tissue and/or force some of the medication into the subcutaneous tissue.

**POST-PROCEDURE STEPS**

1. Follow standard post-procedure steps.
2. Dispose of used materials in proper receptacles and perform hand hygiene.
3. Assess the patient following immunization and educate about potential adverse effects, including allergic reactions. Provide written information, if available, to reinforce verbal education.
4. Booster vaccinations are necessary for long-term immunity to certain diseases, including tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis.

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