

PONDERING PEG TUBE LACEMENT

Ethical Considerations in Advanced Dementia

NURS 6033: Ethical Dimensions in Nursing
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Case study

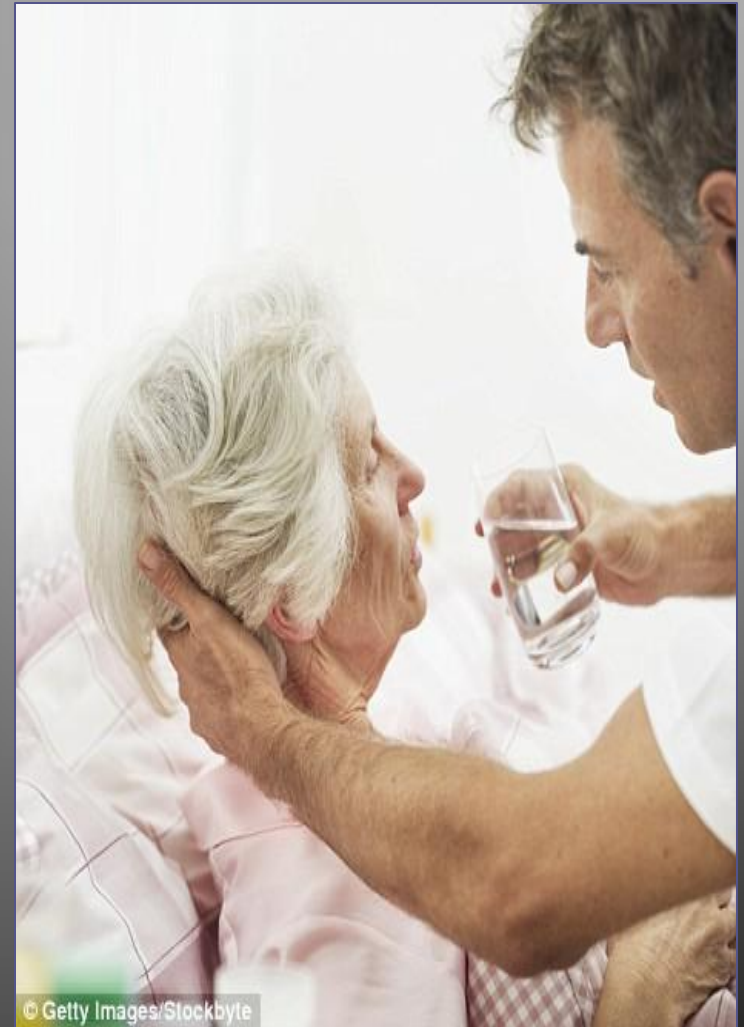
- ▶ Mrs. Inez 84 y/o white female
- ▶ Resident of local nursing home
- ▶ Diagnosed with Alzheimer's dementia at age 79
- ▶ Admitted to the hospital with dehydration
- ▶ GI was consulted on Day 3 of admit for PEG tube placement for malnutrition



Case study

▶ HPI

- Historian– nephew
- Dementia– progressed over past year
- Bedridden
- Decreased dietary intake over the past 2 months
- 30 pound weight loss
- Nursing home– Full assistance with meals
- Consuming less than 25%
- Past week– Sips of Ensure and water with medications
- Nephew– “Wants what is best” for his aunt



Case study

▶ PMH

- Alzheimer's dementia
- Osteoarthritis
- Colon polyps
- Diverticular disease

▶ PSH

- Appendectomy

▶ SH

- Widow– 1 child (deceased)
- Nephew and his wife– caregivers prior to nursing home
- No living will or durable power of attorney

▶ FH

- Noncontributory

Case study

▶ Medications

- Aricept
- Namenda
- Megace
- ASA
- MVI
- Metamucil

▶ Allergies

- NKDA

▶ ROS

- Difficult to obtain



▶ PE

- VS Stable, Afebrile
- 95 pounds
- Lethargic– Opens eyes
- Mumbles– oriented to person, recognizes nephew
- Lungs– Clear
- Abdomen– scaphoid
- Bowel sounds– present
- Stage 2 decubitus ulcer to coccyx

Case study



- ▶ Lab/Diagnostic test
 - Admit
 - Na 150; BUN 55; Creat 1.9
 - Hgb 13; HCT 39
 - Day 3
 - Na 145; BUN 22; Creat 1.1
 - Hgb 9.8; HCT 29
 - Prealbumin– 10 mg/dl
 - Video esophagram– delayed swallowing reflex, no aspiration

Case Study

▶ Assessment

- Oral phase dysphagia
- Malnutrition
- Alzheimer's dementia

▶ Plan

- PEG or not to PEG?



American Gastroenterological Association (AGA)

- ▶ Position statement
 - PEG tubes should be considered for patients that:
 - cannot or will not eat
 - have a functional gut
 - for whom a safe method of access is possible

(AGA, 1994)

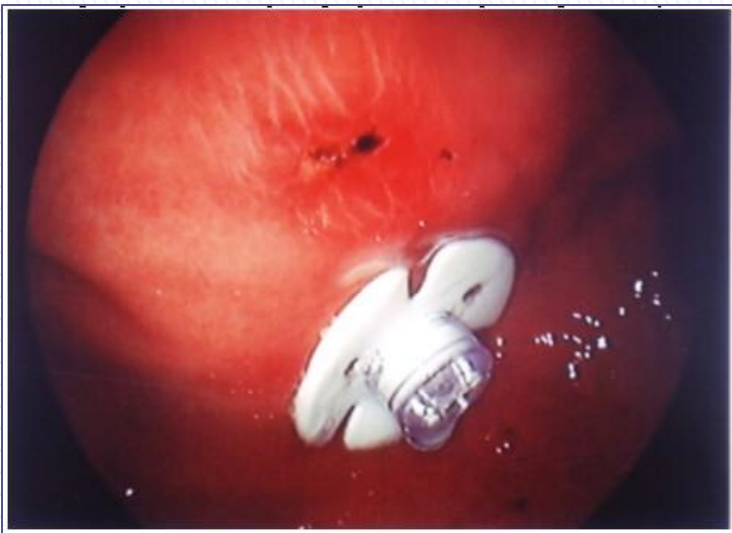


THE AGA INSTITUTE

Ethical considerations

Treatment Options

- ▶ PEG
- ▶ Not to PEG

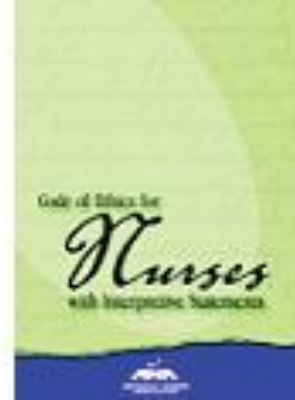


Moral Principles

- ▶ Beneficence
- ▶ Non-maleficence
- ▶ Autonomy
- ▶ Justice

Ethical considerations

Code of
Ethics for
Nurses
With
Interpretive
Statements



Code of Ethics for Nurses

“The acceptability and importance of carefully considered decisions regarding resuscitation status, withholding and withdrawing life sustaining therapies, forgoing medically provided nutrition and hydration, aggressive pain and symptom management and advanced directives are increasingly evident.”

(American Nurses Association, 2001)

Legal considerations

- ▶ Advance Directives
- ▶ Withholding vs. Withdrawing
- ▶ Medicare/Medicaid laws for nursing homes
- ▶ Reimbursement higher for PEG patients



Legal considerations/cases

Terri Schiavo



Nancy Cruzan



MARLETTE
TALKING TO BERNARD
LACROIX



"SECOND OPINION, ANYONE?"

DNP/APRN Role

- ▶ Recognize personal values and beliefs
- ▶ Advance Directives
- ▶ Determine If Patient Is A Candidate For PEG Tube
- ▶ Moral Principles
- ▶ Code Of Ethics For Nurses
- ▶ Assess Cultural And Religious Beliefs
- ▶ Obligation Of Veracity
 - Meet with family– Discuss Benefits And Burden Of PEG tube

Case study

- ▶ Mrs. Inez's Nephew–
“wants what is best” for his aunt
- ▶ No Advanced directives
- ▶ Discuss benefits and burdens of PEG tube
- ▶ Following Day– Nephew elected to forego PEG placement as he believed she “would not have wanted a feeding tube”
- ▶ Continued hand feeding with pureed foods and nutritional supplements



Summary

- ▶ Did Mrs. Inez's nephew make the right decision?
- ▶ Quality of Life
 - Improved
 - Maintained
 - Diminished
- ▶ SUPPORT

Right to Life?



Right to Death?



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