

Q10

Title: Patient Safety Alert: Preventing Infection from Misuse of Medication Vials

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"Introduction: The Joint Commission (JC) issues periodic sentinel event alerts to promote improvements in patient safety.

Methods: We highlight JC sentinel event alert #52, Preventing Infections from Medication Vial Misuse.

Results: Thousands of patients have been adversely affected by misuse of single-dose/single use and multiple-dose vials with hepatitis B and C and bacterial infections reported in multiple outbreaks. Causes of misuse Include 1) use of SDV on multiple patients; 2) use of the same syringe to re-enter MDV's multiple times for the same patient with reuse of that same MDV on multiple other patients and 3) reusing a syringe to obtain additional dose(s) from a MDV leaving it for use on another patient, with the risk of back wash of any contaminating blood borne pathogens.

Conclusions: Proposed solutions emphasize: 1) proper use of SDV through the CDC's ONE needle, ONE syringe, ONE time campaign: discarding after single use; never combining content of multiple SDV's to obtain a full dose and not storing SD/SU vials for later use; 2) limiting use of MDV to only one patient whenever possible to reduce risk of contamination, but when used again using a new needle and new syringe every time, not leaving needles in vial entry diaphragms between uses, appropriate disinfection of the rubber septum and not using beyond use dating; and 3) periodically review and directly observe step-by-step aseptic training practices of dermatology office personnel who mix and administer all injectable medications including buffered lidocaine, corticosteroids, and botulinum toxin.

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