

Vascular Access Adverse Events: A Comprehensive Literature Review and Comparative Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

Vascular access devices (VADs) play a crucial role in healthcare by providing access to the circulatory system for various medical treatments and procedures.¹ These devices come in several types, including central venous catheters and peripheral catheters.²

By significantly enhancing patient care, vascular access devices allow for the efficient delivery of treatments, such as chemotherapy, while minimizing the need for repeated needle sticks and patient discomfort. However, it's essential to note the fact that these devices can also present potential risks and complications.^{3,4}

This literature review aims to identify and analyze the rates of adverse events associated with venous access, with a particular emphasis on peripheral vascular access and other commonly used access devices.

METHODOLOGY

A search was conducted through the PubMed database to identify relevant studies reporting on the rates of complications associated with vascular access devices, with a focus on peripheral catheters (PVCs), peripherally inserted central catheters (PICCs), midline catheters (MCs), and central venous catheters (CVCs).

Studies that provided data on the rates of complications were included.

Additional studies were retrieved by examining the reference lists of relevant publications.

The selected studies were analyzed, and data regarding the rates of specific adverse events were extracted and compared across the different catheter types.

| | Inclusion | Exclusion |
|--------------|--|--|
| Population | Adult patients requiring vascular access | <div><div>▪ Non-human</div><div>▪ Pediatric patients</div></div> |
| Intervention | PIVC, MC, PICC, CVC | Other VADs |
| Comparator | PIVC, MC, PICC, CVC | Other VADs |
| Outcomes | Safety outcomes | Non-relevant outcomes |
| Study Design | Any primary | <div><div>▪ Non-clinical studies</div><div>▪ Literature reviews, meta-analyses</div><div>▪ Commentaries, editorials, letters</div></div> |
| Timeframe | Up to 2023 | None |
| Language | English language | Any other language |

Figure 1. PICOS Selection Criteria

RESULTS

The literature search yielded 29 studies reporting on the rates of adverse events associated with the different types of catheters.

Data on various complications, such as deep vein thrombosis (DVT), bloodstream infections, pneumothorax, phlebitis, cellulitis, dislodgment, infiltration, occlusion, pain/discomfort, leaking, hematoma, bleeding, and pulmonary embolism, were extracted and analyzed.

RESULTS (continued)

| | Peripheral Intravenous Catheter (PIVC) | Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC) | Midline Catheter (MC) | Central Venous Catheter (CVC) |
|------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Deep Venous Thrombosis (DVT) | 2.3% ^(6,6) | 2.8% ^(6,18,19,20,21,22,23,24,25) | 2.5% ^(18,20,25,30,31) | 10.9% ^(31,32) |
| Bloodstream Infection (BSI) | 0.2% ^(5,7,8,9,10) | 8.0% ^(5,20,21,24,25,26,27,28) | 11.1% ^(20,25,30) | 11.8% ^(27,33) |
| Pneumothorax | - | - | - | 17.0% ⁽³²⁾ |
| Phlebitis | 11.9% ^(8,9,11,12,13,14,15,16) | 17.0% ⁽²⁹⁾ | - | - |
| Occlusion | 8.8% ^(7,9,11,12,16,17) | 3.4% ^(20,22) | 1.8% ⁽²⁰⁾ | - |
| Pulmonary Embolism (PE) | - | 0.2% ^(20,27) | 0.1% ⁽²⁰⁾ | 1.4% ⁽²⁷⁾ |

Figure 2. VADs Safety Profile

The results revealed varying rates of complications across the different catheter types. The rates of DVT were 2.36% (range 1.80%-3.40%) for PVC, 2.87% (range 0.37%-19.4%) for PICC, 2.50% (range 1.05%-7.04%) for MC, and 10.91% (range 7.55%-15%) for CVC.

Bloodstream infections showed rates of 0.21% (range 0%-1.00%) for PVC, 8.02% (range 0%-32%) for PICC, 11.17% (range 0.3%-27%) for MC, and 11.82% (range 2.27%-19%) for CVC. Phlebitis rates were 11.96% (range 0.9%-28.8%) for PVC and 17.00% for PICC. Pneumothorax had a rate of 17.00% for CVC, while other complications displayed varied rates across different catheter types.

CONCLUSIONS

This literature review highlights the varying rates of adverse events associated with peripheral vascular access and other access devices. It emphasizes the importance of considering the specific catheter type when assessing the risks and complications associated with vascular access procedures.

The findings can guide healthcare providers in selecting the most appropriate catheter type based on the desired outcomes and potential risks.

Further research as well as a standardized reporting of adverse events will contribute to a better understanding of these complications and help in the development of effective prevention and management strategies.

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