The use of antiembolic stockings

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Abstract

Aim
To review the literature and to audit current usage of anti-embolic stockings (AES) in one UK hospital Trust.

Methodology
Two related articles discuss the literature behind best practice for selection of anti-embolic stockings and the development and results of an audit to establish practice regarding use of AES in the University of Leicester Group of Hospitals.

Results
The literature review established that use of AES is effective used alone or in combination with other methods. Knee length AES are more preferred to thigh length. It is critically important that patients are thoroughly assessed prior to application of AES. Audit among 180 patients identified that only 31% of patients had been assessed. At the time of the audit, of the 61 patients who were given AES, only 84% were actually wearing them. Discomfort was one key reason why patients did not wear their AES.

Conclusion
AES are not the low risk intervention that it is commonly believed they are. No consistent policy for assessment or documentation was identified within the patients audited.