

Peripheral vascular catheters (PVC) are the most frequently used invasive medical devices in hospitals, with 330 million sold each year in the USA alone” Zhang et al (2016).

Abstract:

Background: Peripheral vascular catheters (PVC) are the most frequently used invasive medical devices in hospitals, with 330 million sold each year in the USA alone. One in three UK inpatients at any one time has at least one PVC in situ according to the Scottish National Prevalence survey.

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Method: A narrative review of studies describing the infection risks associated with PVCs.

Results: It is estimated that 30-80% of hospitalised patients receive at least one PVC during their hospital stay. Despite their prevalence, PVCs are not benign devices, and the high number of PVCs inserted annually has resulted in serious catheter-related bloodstream infections and significant morbidity, prolonged hospital stay and increased healthcare system costs. To date, PVC infections have been under-evaluated. Most studies focus on central venous catheter rather than PVC-associated bloodstream infections. Risks associated with PVC infection must be addressed to reduce patient morbidity and associated costs of prolonged hospital admission and treatment.

Discussion: This article discusses the sources and routes of PVC-associated infection and outlines known effective prevention and intervention strategies.

Reference:

Zhang, L., Cao, S., Marsh, N., Ray-Barruel, G., Flynn, J., Larsen, E. and Rickard, C.M. (2016) Infection risks associated with peripheral vascular catheters. *Journal of Infection Prevention*. 17(5), p.207-213.



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