Japan Council for Quality Health Care

Project to Collect Medical Near-Miss/ Adverse Event Information

Medical Safety Information

No.105, August 2015

Forgetting to Open/Close a T-shaped Stopcock

Fourteen cases have been reported in which the intended flow was not achieved because a staff member had forgotten to open or close the T-shaped stopcock on a catheter or tube (information collection period: from January 1, 2011 to June 30, 2015). The information is compiled based on “Medical Adverse Event Information to Be Shared” (p.130) in the 11th Quarterly Report and “Recurrence of Events and Occurrence of Similar Events” (p.197) in the 40th Quarterly Report.

Cases have been reported involving a drug not being administered because a staff member forgot to open a T-shaped stopcock or reversed blood flow because a staff member forgot to close a T-shaped stopcock.

Image of case 1

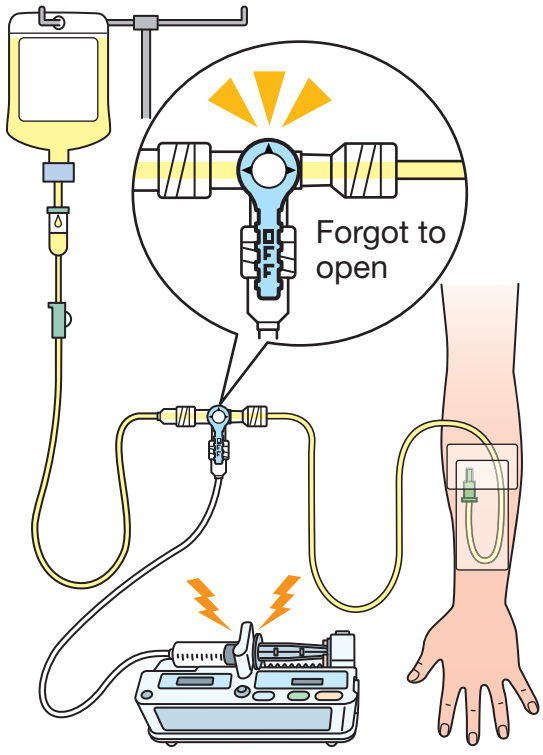
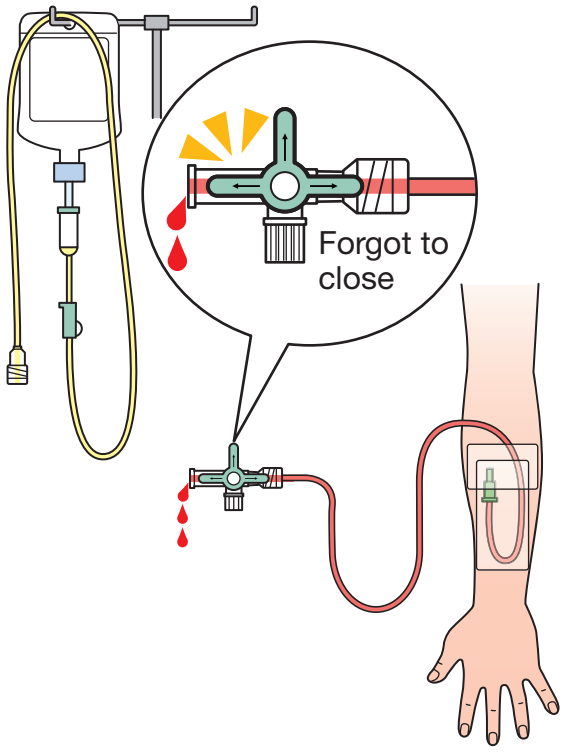


Image of case 2



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Case 1

Administration of a preparation of Humulin R was to be commenced, using a syringe pump. After placing the syringe in the syringe pump, the nurse connected the line to the T-shaped stopcock, but pressed the start button on the pump without having opened the T-shaped stopcock. S/he subsequently noticed that the preparation of Humulin R had not been administered.

Case 2

The infusion had finished, so the nurse removed the infusion set to administer the lock and injected normal saline via the T-shaped stopcock. The nurse should have closed off the flow through the T-shaped stopcock and removed the syringe, but s/he was called by another patient and went to attend to that patient after withdrawing the syringe, leaving the T-shaped stopcock open. When the nurse subsequently returned to the patient, s/he discovered reversed blood flow through the open T-shaped stopcock.

Preventive measures taken at the medical institutions in which the events occurred.

- **Staff members will check the orientation of the stopcock and the flow when using T-shaped stopcocks.**
- **Staff members will ensure that they understand the structure of T-shaped stopcocks.**

* As part of the Project to Collect Medical Near-Miss/Adverse Event Information (a Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare grant project), this medical safety information was prepared based on the cases collected in the Project as well as on opinions of the "Comprehensive Evaluation Panel" to prevent the occurrence and recurrence of medical adverse events. See quarterly reports and annual reports posted on the Japan Council for Quality Health Care website for details of the Project.
http://www.med-safe.jp/
* Accuracy of information was ensured at the time of preparation but cannot be guaranteed in the future.
* This information is intended neither to limit the discretion of healthcare providers nor to impose certain obligations or responsibilities on them.

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