

# Superficial Thrombophlebitis

## Pre-podcast questions:

1. What signs and symptoms may you expect to see when a patient is diagnosed with superficial thrombophlebitis?
- A. Erythema
  - B. Edema
  - C. Pain
  - D. All of the above

**Answer: D. All of the above**

**Rationale: Erythema, edema, and pain along with warmth can all be common symptoms patients experience when they present with superficial thrombophlebitis (ST).**

**Objective: Recognize signs, symptoms, and potential complications of superficial thrombophlebitis.**

2. According to the 2012 American College of Chest Physicians guidelines, which of the following would be the highest recommended anticoagulation therapy for someone with superficial thrombophlebitis (ST)?
- A. Enoxaparin
  - B. Fondaparinux
  - C. Rivaroxaban
  - D. Warfarin

**Answer: B. Fondaparinux**

**Rationale: The ACCP guidelines recommend Fondaparinux 2.5mg daily for 45 days over any other anticoagulation therapy for patients with superficial thrombophlebitis. This recommendation was based off of the Calisto Trial of 2010. Rivaroxaban and Warfarin are not recommended in the guidelines at all and Enoxaparin has been shown to be effective, but the guidelines prefer Fondaparinux over a LMWH.**

**Objective: Suggest anticoagulants where appropriate for the treatment of superficial thrombophlebitis.**

3. After being put on anticoagulation therapy, a patient with superficial thrombophlebitis requests something additional for symptomatic relief. What would be the best therapeutic option to give them?
- A. Ibuprofen
  - B. Acetaminophen
  - C. Diclofenac Gel
  - D. No medicines will help with symptom relief besides anticoagulants

**Answer: C. Diclofenac Gel**

**Rationale:** An NSAID is recommended and will be most beneficial for the inflammation that is occurring over acetaminophen. An oral NSAID product like Ibuprofen should not be used because an anticoagulation therapy has already been prescribed, so giving both anticoagulation therapy and an oral NSAID there is an increased risk of a gastrointestinal bleed. This leaves a topical NSAID like Diclofenac gel to be utilized for symptom relief.

**Objective:** Evaluate a patient with superficial thrombophlebitis and create a treatment plan based on patient characteristics including signs and symptoms.

### Post-podcast questions:

1. What is the expected outcome of using an anticoagulation therapy in patients with superficial thrombophlebitis (ST)?
- A. Relieve pain symptoms
  - B. Prevention of a thromboembolic event
  - C. Avoid surgery such as ligation
  - D. None of the above

**Answer: B. Prevention of a thromboembolic event**

**Rationale:** Anticoagulation therapy is utilized in ST to prevent complications such as PE and DVT which can be categorized as a thromboembolic event. Surgery is non-pharmacological option and anticoagulation does not avoid this therapy. Relief of symptoms can be achieved with an oral or topical NSAID.

**Objective:** Recognize signs, symptoms, and potential complications of superficial thrombophlebitis.

2. A 60-year-old female with history of DVT comes into the emergency room in significant pain. She is diagnosed with a proximal 8cm superficial thrombophlebitis (ST). The patient tells you, "I would do anything to never have another DVT again!" What therapeutic regimen would you choose for this patient?
- A. Fondaparinux 2.5mg for 45 days and Ibuprofen 200mg once daily as needed.
  - B. Diclofenac Gel 1%, apply 2g the affected area four times a day.
  - C. Fondaparinux 2.5mg for 3 days
  - D. Fondaparinux 2.5mg for 45 days and compression stockings.

**Answer: A. Fondaparinux 2.5mg for 45 days and compression stockings.**

**Rationale:** Oral NSAIDs should not be given with anticoagulation. Diclofenac Gel is only used for symptom relief not to prevent complications. If Fondaparinux is going to be used guidelines recommend 45 days not just 3 days. Compression stockings would be a good idea for symptom relief in most patients.

**Objectives:** Suggest anticoagulants where appropriate for the treatment of superficial thrombophlebitis. Evaluate a patient with superficial thrombophlebitis and create a treatment plan based on patient characteristics including signs and symptoms.

3. A 70-year-old male is diagnosed with distal (below the knee) superficial thrombophlebitis (ST) in the walk in clinic. He can go home although he is still having some pain from the ST. You note that the patient doesn't have any prescription insurance, only Medicare Part A and B. What therapy may be the best option for this patient?

- A. Fondaparinux
- B. Diclofenac Gel
- C. Enoxaparin
- D. Ibuprofen

**Answer: D. Ibuprofen**

**Rationale: The patient does not have prescription insurance; it was discussed that Fondaparinux is quite expensive and Ibuprofen is a cheaper alternative. There are also studies that show Enoxaparin and Ibuprofen have similar outcomes. Finally, Diclofenac Gel is only for symptom relief not for prevention of complications.**

**Objective: Evaluate a patient with superficial thrombophlebitis and create a treatment plan based on patient characteristics including signs and symptoms.**