Evaluating Albumin Utilization in a Community-Based Hospital Post-Hetastarch Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Warning

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Albumin is a medication commonly used in the hospital setting. Based on the indications described in the UHC and ATS guidelines, the use of albumin was considered inappropriate only if both exclusion criteria were met. To determine if the new warning against the use of hetastarch is appropriate, albumin utilization was evaluated in a retrospective chart review of patients who were either albumin or hetastarch users over a period of 8 months. The study was performed at a community-based hospital in Miami, FL. The study found that out of 20 patients, albumin was used after exhausting the use of colloids in only 5 patients. Out of 47 patients, 8 patients were administered albumin for an indication not mentioned in the UHC or ATS guidelines. The study also found that the utilization of albumin in this subset of patients was not consistent with the guidelines. The study concluded that the use of albumin should be evaluated for appropriateness and appropriate guidelines should be followed.