**ALCOHOL WITHDRAWAL PROPHYLAXIS PROTOCOL**

**Indication:** Any patient with known history of daily ethanol use exceeding 1 - 2 drinks per day, regular episodes of binge drinking greater than two days per week, previous history of alcohol withdrawal or current drinking with history of treatment for alcohol related disease process.

1. Initiate 10% alcohol drip at 0.4 ml/kg/hr using *ideal body weight*.

2. Measure blood alcohol level at 6 hours, 24 hours, and 72 hours after infusion is initiated. If blood alcohol level is greater than 80 mg/dl (0.08%), hold infusion for 2 hours and decrease rate by 50%.

3. Monitor patient for signs and symptoms of alcohol withdrawal. Signs and symptoms of alcohol withdrawal include:
   - sweating, pulse greater than 100 bpm,
   - increased hand tremor,
   - insomnia,
   - nausea or vomiting,
   - transient visual, tactile or auditory hallucinations or illusions,
   - psychomotor agitation,
   - anxiety,
   - Grand mal seizures.

   *Ensure symptoms are not due to general medical condition or by another mental disorder.*

4. If patient has no signs or symptoms of alcohol withdrawal:
   - after 24 hours from start, decrease rate by 20%
   - after 48 hours from start, decrease rate further by 50%
   - after 72 hours from start, decrease rate further by 50%
   - after 84 hours from start, discontinue infusion.

5. If patient develops signs and symptoms of alcohol withdrawal, increase rate by 50%. If symptoms of alcohol withdrawal continue for 6 hours after the infusion is increased, notify the resident on call.

    ***Do not hold or discontinue alcohol infusion for diagnostic or operative procedures***

    The alcohol infusion is appropriate for patients admitted to a floor status level of care.