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## INTRODUCTION

**T**HE KNOWLEDGE associated with the care and maintenance of vascular access devices is necessary, specialized, and ever-changing. To date, there is little evidence and research to support nursing care or education associated with vascular access, yet vascular access is used numerous times each day by nurses in all settings, extremely vital to oncology care, and has few dedicated resources to educate students, nurses, other health care providers, and patients. Therefore, it is imperative that oncology nurses continue to seek best practice outcomes by increasing their knowledge, enhancing their critical thinking, and implementing and utilizing evidence-based research. This issue of *Seminars in Oncology Nursing* is dedicated to enhancing best care in vascular access for the oncology patient. Understanding the evolution of vascular access and its relationship to the state of science is the first article that sets the stage for critical thinking in patient care. The second article presents the various types of devices and criteria for selection, with a follow-up article on the specific topics of placement, insertion, and maintenance. Next, we present enhanced care issues associated with the maintenance of connectors, early recognition of infectious complications, and management of non-infectious complications. It is a combination of current knowledge from research, synthesis, and practice that has led to this issue on vascular access. Whether you are searching for the right device with your patient, looking for the latest care on flushing connectors, assessment criteria for a bloodstream infection, or interventions for avoiding a catheter-related air embolism, your search is assisted by this issue. This work is the result of many professionals who hope to make a difference in the lives of families, nurses, and patients.

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