

Fluid Therapy: Where are we now?

“Fluid is your friend’: for most of their ‘lives’ intravenous fluids have been considered beneficial by virtue of their very existence, “No RCT required”... Yet questions were being asked particularly when a 1998 meta-analysis indicated that albumin was causing harm. Importantly, the subsequent SAFE fluid trial led the way to large ICU RCTs.

The age old question of colloids versus crystalloids was joined with queries about normal saline’s safety, and how much fluid should be given. In this new millennium there have been an exponential rise of different types of trials examining fluid choices. Further, the FEAST trial finally began to ask the integral question of not just ‘Is more better?’, but whether one should be fasting or feasting on fluids at all. In this lecture we shall explore all these issues, and the older, classic fluid trials, variation between countries, and the onslaught of 2017/2018 fluid studies.