When exactly did you understand pulmonary artery (PA) catheters? Was it the first time you read about the mechanics of a PA catheter? Was it in the critical care course when the educator passed a catheter around and you could see all the ports? Was it when you saw a PA catheter inserted? Or was it the very first time you were the one responsible for putting a PA catheter together, assisting in the insertion, and then caring for the patient?

Truly pinpointing exactly when you finally understood is probably difficult. Most likely it was a combination of these events that led to your full comprehension. The truth is, the understanding of something as complex as a PA catheter, or for that matter many aspects of critical care practice (eg, pacemakers, chest tubes, vasoactive drugs), does not happen in...
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