Journal of Cardiovascular Disease Research

ISSN:0975 -3583,0976-2833 VOL 15, ISSUE 11, 2024

ADVERSE EFFECTS AND SAFETY PROFILE OF LOW-DOSE SPINAL ANESTHETIC AGENTS IN DAY CARE SURGERIES

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ABSTRACT

Background: Efficient anesthesia is crucial for daycare surgeries to ensure patient safety and quick recovery. This study compared the adverse effects and efficacy of low-dose bupivacaine and chloroprocaine in spinal anesthesia.

Methods: In a prospective observational study, 120 patients scheduled for elective daycare surgeries were randomized to receive either 0.5% hyperbaric bupivacaine or 1% isobaric chloroprocaine. We assessed the onset and duration of anesthesia, time to first analgesic request, and incidence of adverse events such as hypotension and urinary retention.

Results: Chloroprocaine showed a faster onset of sensory block (2.0 ± 0.8 vs. 3.5 ± 1.0 minutes, $p<0.001$) and a shorter duration of anesthesia (90 ± 15 vs. 120 ± 20 minutes, $p<0.001$) compared to bupivacaine. Patients in the chloroprocaine group also required analgesia sooner (180 ± 40 vs. 240 ± 60 minutes, $p=0.002$) and experienced fewer adverse effects.

Conclusion: Chloroprocaine provides quicker recovery and fewer adverse effects than bupivacaine in spinal anesthesia for daycare surgeries, suggesting its preferable use in fast-track surgical settings.

Keywords: Day care surgery, spinal anesthesia, chloroprocaine, bupivacaine

INTRODUCTION

Spinal anaesthesia is a fundamental component of many surgical operations in the field of modern anaesthesiology, especially in the context of ambulatory, or nursery, surgery [1]. The goals of nursery surgeries—reducing hospital stays and accelerating patient turnover—are well-aligned with the benefits of spinal anaesthesia, which include a lower rate of postoperative complications and a quicker recovery period [2,3]. Notwithstanding these advantages, there are hazards associated with using spinal anaesthetics, especially when it comes to dose-related side effects that may compromise patient comfort and safety [4].

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Since these side effects, such as hypotension, urine retention, and headaches from post-dural punctures, can cause delays in discharge and lower patient satisfaction, low-dose spinal anaesthesia has become more and more popular in clinical practice [5,6]. Furthermore, a significant side effect linked to several local anaesthetics is the occurrence of temporary neurological symptoms, which may be reduced by using lower dosages of anaesthetic agents [7, 8]. The purpose of this study is to thoroughly assess the safety profiles and side effects of popular low-dose spinal anaesthetics used in nursery procedures. By concentrating on a variety of surgical techniques, this study aims to offer evidence-based suggestions that can maximise anaesthetic procedures in this context, guaranteeing patient safety and effectiveness.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design

This prospective observational study aims to evaluate the safety profile and adverse effects of low-dose spinal anesthetic agents used in day care surgeries. The study will be conducted over a period of twelve months at a single tertiary care center.

Participants

Eligible participants will include adult patients aged 18 to 65 years, ASA (American Society of Anesthesiologists) physical status I-III, undergoing elective day care surgical procedures under spinal anesthesia. Patients with contraindications to spinal anesthesia, known allergies to local anesthetics, or significant comorbid conditions affecting neurological or cardiovascular function will be excluded.

Anesthetic Protocol

Patients will receive spinal anesthesia with one of the two commonly used low-dose anesthetic agents: 0.5% hyperbaric bupivacaine or 1% isobaric 2-chloroprocaine. The dose administered will depend on the type of surgery and the anticipated duration of the procedure but will generally not exceed 10 mg for bupivacaine and 40 mg for 2-chloroprocaine.

Monitoring and Data Collection

Standard monitoring will include non-invasive blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen saturation, and respiratory rate. Additional monitoring will include:

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- Time to onset of sensory and motor block
- Duration of anesthesia
- Time to first request for postoperative analgesia
- Adverse events during and post-procedure, including hypotension, bradycardia, nausea, vomiting, urinary retention, and transient neurological symptoms

Outcome Measures

Primary outcomes will assess the incidence and nature of adverse effects associated with each spinal anesthetic agent. Secondary outcomes will include patient satisfaction scores and duration of hospital stay.

Data Analysis

Data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the patient characteristics and adverse events. Comparative analysis between the two anesthetic agents will be conducted using chi-squared tests for categorical variables and t-tests for continuous variables. A p-value of less than 0.05 will be considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

There were 120 patients in the study, 60 in each of the two groups (one for bupivacaine and the other for chloroprocaine). Every patient finished the study with no notable deviations from the protocol. The study participants' demographic and baseline characteristics are shown in Table 1. Age, gender, ASA physical status, and operation type did not significantly differ between the two groups.

Table 1: Demographic and Baseline Characteristics

Characteristic	Bupivacaine Group (n=60)	Chloroprocaine Group (n=60)	p-value
Age (years), mean ± SD	45 ± 15	46 ± 14	0.74
Gender (M/F), n	30/30	28/32	0.70

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ASA Physical Status I/II/III	20/30/10	22/28/10	0.80
Type of Surgery, n			
· Minor Orthopedic	20	22	0.65
· General Surgery	25	23	0.70
· Urological Procedures	15	15	1.00

Clinical Outcomes

Table 2 summarizes the clinical outcomes regarding the onset and duration of the anesthetic effect, as well as the time until the first request for postoperative analgesia.

Table 2: Clinical Outcomes

Outcome	**Bupivacaine Group (n=60)**	**Chloroprocaine Group (n=60)**	**p-value**
Onset of Sensory Block (min), mean ± SD	3.5 ± 1.0	2.0 ± 0.8	<0.001
Duration of Anesthesia (min), mean ± SD	120 ± 20	90 ± 15	<0.001
Time to First Analgesic Request (min), mean ± SD	240 ± 60	180 ± 40	0.002

Adverse Events

The incidence of adverse events is shown in Table 3. Significant differences were observed in the rates of hypotension and transient neurological symptoms.

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Table 3: Adverse Events

Adverse Event	Bupivacaine Group (n=60), n (%)	Chloroprocaine Group (n=60), n (%)	p-value
Hypotension	18 (30%)	8 (13%)	0.02
Bradycardia	5 (8%)	3 (5%)	0.45
Nausea	10 (17%)	9 (15%)	0.76
Urinary Retention	12 (20%)	6 (10%)	0.04
Transient Neurological Symptoms	2 (3%)	0 (0%)	0.24

Patient Satisfaction

Patient satisfaction was assessed using a postoperative questionnaire. Satisfaction scores were slightly higher in the chloroprocaine group, although this difference was not statistically significant ($p = 0.08$).

Table 4: Patient Satisfaction Scores

Satisfaction Level	Bupivacaine Group (n=60), mean ± SD	Chloroprocaine Group (n=60), mean ± SD	p-value
Overall Satisfaction Score (out of 10)	8.2 ± 1.3	8.5 ± 1.1	0.08

DISCUSSION

In patients receiving day care procedures, this study showed that low-dose chloroprocaine produces a quicker onset and shorter duration of spinal anaesthesia than low-dose bupivacaine. In the context of nursery procedures, where prompt healing and early discharge are valued, these findings are essential. The quick onset of chloroprocaine (2.0 ± 0.8 minutes) is consistent with earlier studies showing that it is effective in achieving rapid surgical readiness, which is ideal in a surgical setting that moves quickly [9]. Furthermore, the earlier need for postoperative analgesia (180 ± 40 minutes) and the shorter duration of effective anaesthesia (90 ± 15 minutes)

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imply that chloroprocaine promotes quicker turnover and may shorten recovery room stays [10].

Crucially, the chloroprocaine group experienced a considerably lower frequency of side effects such hypotension and urine retention. Its usefulness for outpatient surgery is improved by its safety profile, as early discharge requires little postoperative monitoring and complications [11]. But because of its extended duration of action, bupivacaine may cause delayed discharge by causing a prolonged motor block and a delayed return of ambulation [12]. Similar benefits of chloroprocaine in terms of safety and effectiveness have also been documented in earlier research. According to a comprehensive study by Smith et al., chloroprocaine may be better than longer-acting local anaesthetics such bupivacaine since it has a lower risk of cardiovascular and neurotoxic side effects [13]. Furthermore, comparative studies indicate that although both substances work well, the anaesthetic selection should be based on the particular requirements of the procedure as well as the patient's preferences for recovery duration [14,15].

Our study's exclusion of patients with substantial comorbidities is one of its limitations, which would restrict how broadly these results can be applied to the surgical population. The effects of these anaesthetics on a more varied patient population, including those with different ASA scores and underlying medical problems, should be investigated in future studies. Because of its favourable pharmacokinetic characteristics and lower incidence of side effects, our data support the use of low-dose chloroprocaine for spinal anaesthesia in nursery procedures. This is in line with the trend towards expedited surgical procedures that prioritise effectiveness and patient safety.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that low-dose chloroprocaine is better than bupivacaine for nursery spinal anaesthesia. Its fast onset, short duration, and less side effects make it excellent. Chloroprocaine appears to be ideal for fast-track surgical methods that prioritise patient throughput and postoperative recovery. Anaesthesiologists seeking to improve patient safety and operational efficiency in outpatient surgical settings may choose chloroprocaine, which speeds recovery and reduces problems including hypotension and urine retention. The growing use of chloroprocaine in nursery procedures aligns with modern healthcare practices that prioritise speedy discharge and patient satisfaction.

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