

25.06.2024

RESEARCH PROTOCOL

The effect of bilateral erector spinae plan block performed after lumbar spinal stabilization surgery on postoperative patient recovery and pain

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1. Introduction

Patients undergoing lumbar spinal stabilization surgery may experience severe postoperative pain lasting at least three days. Analgesia after lumbar stabilization surgery is beneficial for early recovery and is therefore necessary. However, traditional opioid-based analgesic techniques; It is associated with many undesirable effects, including nausea, vomiting, itching, and sedation. Inadequate postoperative pain control also has many side effects on physiological systems such as the cardiovascular, pulmonary, gastrointestinal, immunological, renal, and hematological systems. Furthermore, inadequate postoperative pain control increases hospital stay, mortality and morbidity, prolongs patient ambulation time, increases patient costs, reduces patient satisfaction, and can lead to the development of chronic postoperative pain. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), opioid analgesics, and local anesthetics are frequently preferred options for providing postoperative analgesia. In cases where these agents are insufficient to prevent pain, regional techniques are often preferred to reduce the need for opioids. Erector spina plane block (ESPB), a component of multimodal analgesia and one of the regional techniques, was first used by Forero et al. for analgesic purposes in thoracic neuropathic pain and later gained popularity. Although ESPB is frequently performed at the thoracic level, its use continues to increase today.

2. Objective

The aim of our study was to reduce the pain levels and analgesic consumption of patients in the first 24 hours after surgery by applying bilateral ESPB postoperatively in patients undergoing lumbar spinal stabilization surgery, to ensure early ambulation of patients, to reduce unwanted side effects related to analgesics, and to reduce hospital stay durations.

3. Hypothesis

Bilateral erector spinae plane block performed after lumbar spinal stabilization surgery reduces the need for postoperative analgesics and shortens the patient's ambulation and hospital stay duration.

4. Study Phase and Nature

Phase IV clinical trial - Prospective randomized controlled single-blind clinical trial

5. Study Population

Patients undergoing elective lumbar stabilization surgery

6. Inclusion Criteria

- Patients who volunteer to participate in the study
- Patients aged 18-65 years

- ASA(American Society of Anesthesiologists) physical status I, II, and III
- Patients undergoing elective lumbar stabilization surgery

7. Exclusion Criteria

- Patients who did not consent to participate in the study
- Patients with ASA physical status IV and V
- Use of anticoagulant medications
- Allergy to local anesthetic drugs
- Patients undergoing lumbar stabilization surgery at level three or higher
- Patients with a history of gastrointestinal bleeding
- Patients with a history of psychiatric illness (Major Depression, Schizophrenia, Bipolar Affective Disorder)
- Patients with narcotic and/or alcohol dependence
- Patients with a history of central and/or peripheral neurological disease

8. Study Center

Anesthesiology and Reanimation Clinic, Bursa High Specialization Training and Research Hospital, Health Sciences University

9. Study Duration

6 months

10. Material–Method

Patients included in the study will be divided into 2 groups of 24 each according to the randomized (closed envelope) sampling method; Erector Spina Plane Block (ESPB, n=24) group and Control group (CG, n=24). Patients who regularly take medication due to cardiovascular or other systemic diseases will continue their medication. Coagulation parameters will be checked before the operation, and those with normal parameters will be included in the study. Patients included in the study will be given information about NRS during the preoperative evaluation. The patients' age, height, weight, gender, additional diseases, ASA scores, operation and anesthesia duration, operation level, and the level of block performed in the group that underwent ESP block will be recorded. Standard ECG, SpO₂, non-invasive blood pressure (invasive blood pressure monitoring in necessary cases), and EtCO₂ monitoring will be performed in the operating room and will be performed before induction, after induction, at 5, 10, 15, 30, 60, 90, 120, 180 minutes, and at the end of anesthesia.

The patients will be registered. After appropriate intravenous access is established in both groups, anesthesia induction will be achieved with 2 mg/kg propofol (Propofol®, Fresenius Kabi, Melsungen, Germany), 1 µg/kg fentanyl (Fentanyl Citrate®, Hospira, USA), and 0.6 mg/kg rocuronium (Esmeron®, Organon, Kloosterstraat, Netherlands). Anesthesia maintenance will be administered with a flow rate of 2 l/min, a 50/50 O₂/air mixture, and 2% sevoflurane (Sevorane®, Abbott, Chicago, USA). Patients will be randomly assigned to two separate groups using a sealed envelope method, regardless of their demographic and surgical characteristics. In the ESPB block group, 20 mg tenoxicam (Tilcotil®, DEVA, Kapaklı, TEKİRDAĞ) and 1 g paracetamol (Parol®, ATABAY, Kurtköy, PENDİK, İSTANBUL) will be administered intravenously 30 minutes before the end of surgery. Before the 23 patients are awakened at the end of the operation, the research anesthesia team, following aseptic and antiseptic rules, will perform an in-plane approach with a linear probe (Hitachi Aloka Prosound F31) with a depth of 2-4 cm and a frequency of 10-15 MHz, positioned approximately 3 cm lateral to the spinous process, one level above the operative level, in the parasagittal plane, under USG guidance (Hitachi Aloka Prosound F31). After visualizing the transverse process, a 100 mm long block needle (Stimuplex® D0.71x80mm, 22G, Braun, Germany) will be inserted through the skin, passing through the trapezius and erector spinae muscles. When the needle reaches the transverse process (approximately 3 cm deep), a test dose of 0.5-1 mL of 0.9% NaCl will be administered between the erector spinae fascia and the transverse process of the vertebra to confirm the needle's position. After the fascia is seen to be open, ESPB will be performed by administering a total of 20 mL of local anesthetic solution, consisting of 10 mL of 0.5% bupivacaine (Buvasin, VEM Pharmaceuticals, Turkey) and 10 mL of 0.9% NaCl, into the erector spinae area. The same procedures will be performed on the opposite side. The control group will receive 20 mg tenoxicam (Tilcotil®, DEVA, Kapaklı, TEKİRDAĞ) and 1 g paracetamol (Parol®, ATABAY, Kurtköy, PENDİK, İSTANBUL) intravenously 30 minutes before the end of surgery. After the surgery, patients will be decararized with 2 mg/kg IV sugammadex (Bridion, Merck Sharp Dohme, New Jersey, USA), extubated, and taken to the recovery unit. After being admitted to the recovery room, both groups will be assessed for NRS scores, and patients with an NRS score >5 will receive 50 mcg of fentanyl (TALİNAT®, VEM ilaç, Kapaklı/TEKİRDAĞ) for rescue analgesia.

A blinded investigator will assess patients' NRS scores, analgesic needs, names of analgesics administered, and nausea/vomiting at 0, 2, 4, 6, 12, and 24 hours postoperatively. The time of the

first analgesic administration, ambulation time, patient satisfaction, and length of hospital stay will be recorded.

11. Research Budget

The cost of 24 block needles and 24 doses of bupivacaine-based medication called buvasin for one patient has been submitted with a pharmaceutical invoice. The expenses will be covered by the researchers.

12. Ethics Committee Approval

An application has been submitted for ethics committee approval.

13. Statistics

Statistical analyses of the obtained data will be performed using the IBM SPSS Statistics 21.0 software package. Descriptive statistics of the data will include mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage values. Chi-square and Fisher's Exact tests will be used for the analysis of categorical variables. The normality assumption of continuous numerical variables will be checked separately in groups using the Shapiro-Wilk test. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) will be used for independent group comparisons of numerical variables showing normal distribution. Kruskal-Wallis (KW) test will be used for variables that do not show normal distribution. For comparisons of consecutive measurements, the Wilcoxon Signed Rank test will be used for pairs of measurements, the Friedman test for more than two measurements, and the Pearson correlation test will be used as a correlation test. The significance level will be set at $p < 0.05$ in all analyses. The required sample size for the study was calculated as 24 patients for each group (the group undergoing ESPB and the group not undergoing ESPB) to ensure a 95% confidence level with an $\alpha = 0.05$ error and a 0.99 effect size, for a total of 48 patients.

14. References

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