

Post-spinal patient satisfaction survey

A Boyd, SJ Worthy, K Whitehouse
Department of Anaesthesia, Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, Newcastle Upon Tyne, UK

Introduction

In 2012, spinal anaesthesia accounted for 62% of all anaesthetic techniques employed for use during caesarean section and overall >90% of sections used regional anaesthesia[1].

This project was set up to examine patient reported side effects after receiving spinal anaesthesia for any intervention in obstetrics and to quantify the level of discomfort these symptoms cause.

Methods

- A patient survey was completed by an anaesthetist during the face to face follow up visit after spinal anaesthesia.
- A total of 36 responses were collected between 22/8/20 and 20/9/20.
- Presence of symptoms was collected using yes/no questions
- Severity score was a 5 point scale from 0-5, with 0 being no distress and 5 extremely distressing
- Overall experience was recorded on a 5 point scale ranging from 'very poor', 'poor', 'neither good nor bad', 'good' or 'excellent'.

Results

- 92% of patients had undergone spinal anaesthesia for caesarean section with the other 8% having had procedures such as tear repair.
- 35/36 patients had a spinal with diamorphine and, where the data was collected, all received a standard dose of 300µg.
- Table 1 shows the results for reported side effects and associated symptom severity scores. The most common and distressing symptoms experienced were itching and nausea/vomiting.
- 34/36 patients rated their experience as 'good' or 'excellent' with no patients responding with 'poor' or 'very poor'.

Symptom	% of patients experiencing symptoms	Mean Symptom severity score (0-5)
Headache	2	1
Paraesthesia	2	1
Back pain	25	2.1
Shivering	31	2.4
Nausea and Vomiting	36	2.7
Itching	81	2.9

Table 1

Discussion

- Itching is by far the most commonly reported symptom after spinal anaesthesia with diamorphine. H1 receptor antagonists are most commonly prescribed for relief of itching (to 97% of our patients in this survey) however evidence has shown these are ineffective[2].
- Discussion within our region suggests that low dose naloxone up to 50mcg subcutaneously or intravenously is effective for treatment of pruritus but this is less supported by previous studies[2].
- A third of patients complain of nausea and vomiting and further work is needed to explore the timing of these symptoms and whether more regular review of patients post - operatively is required to improve this.
- Our survey demonstrates the high incidence of side effects from spinal anaesthesia with opiates and we suggest these side effects should be discussed in greater detail with patients at the preoperative visit by the anaesthetist.

References

1. Obstetric Association of Anaesthesia. National Obstetric Anaesthesia Data for 2012 - a report. 2012. Http://www.oaa - anaes.ac.uk_managed>cms>files
2. Kumar K, Singh SI. Neuraxial opioid-induced pruritis: An update. J Anaesthesiol Clin Pharmacol. 2013; 29: 303 -7