

# Effects of Thoracic Epidural Anesthesia on Liver Blood Flow and Indocyanine Green Clearance Test in Living-Donor Liver Transplantation: A Prospective, Randomized, Double-Blind Study

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#### **ABSTRACT**

Background. Donors are volunteers without any health problems. Therefore, the anesthetic management of donor safety is an important issue. Our aim in this study was to compare thoracic epidural anesthesia and general anesthesia effects on liver blood flow by means of liver function tests and indocyanine green and compared with living-donor liver transplantation.

Methods. Subjects were divided into 2 equal groups: the control group (group I) and the epidural block group (group II, closed envelope method). In group II patients, the epidural catheter was inserted at the  $T_{6-8}$  level. In all patients, anesthesia was standardized with the use of lidocaine, fentanyl, and thiopental. Indocyanine green clearance test values before general anesthesia (T0), after induction of general anesthesia (T1), after transection (T2), and at postoperative 24 and 72 hours were recorded. Simultaneously, hemoglobin, hematocrit, platelet count, prothrombin time (PT), international normalized ratio (INR), total bilirubin, direct bilirubin, albumin, aspartate transaminase, and alanine transaminase values were analyzed.

Results. Plasma disappearance rate (PDR) and retention at 15 minutes (R15) of indocyanine green were not statistically significant difference between groups (P > .05). Intragroup comparison of PDR and R15 values at times T1, T2, T3, and T4 showed that the values at T0 were statistically significant (P < .05). PT and INR values were significantly different for all times within each group (P < .05). It was concluded that the use of thoracic epidural anesthesia has no effect on global liver function and liver-related liability tests in patients undergoing elective liver donor surgery.

IVER transplantation is the only opportunity in the treatment of patients with end-stage liver failure. Donors are volunteers with no health problems. Therefore, safety of donors is the most important issue in the management of anesthesia [1].

Hepatic hypoperfusion is an important factor in perioperative liver failure. In addition, hypoperfusion is suggested to initiate or contribute to systemic inflammatory response syndrome. Blocking of thoracic efferent sympathetic fibers results in regional arterial dilatation and regional blood flow. However, hypotension is the result of decrease in systemic vascular resistance, and this may reduce hepatic

blood flow. Lumbar thoracic anesthesia is shown to reduce liver blood flow in nonhuman and human studies [2]. Patients undergoing major abdominal surgery, such as hepatectomy, are at risk for postoperative complications, including multiple organ failure. Epidural anesthesia and

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**Table 1. Patient Demographics and Characteristics** 

Variable	Group I (n = 20)	Group II (n = 20)	P Value
Age (y)	27.5 ± 7.5	26.5 ± 7.8	.523
Sex (M/W)	16/4	12/8	.399
Height (cm)	$172.1\pm7.5$	$169.2\pm8.2$	.802
ASA I/II (n)	5/15	14/6	.245
Weight (kg)	$69.9\pm8.9$	$69.1\pm7.8$	.696

Note. Values are presented as mean  $\pm$  SD or  $\emph{n}$ . Group I: control; group II: epidural.

Abbreviation: ASA, American Society of Anesthesiologists physical status.

analgesia are shown to be effective in reducing perioperative risks, such as intraoperative blood flow and thromboembolic events, and improving postoperative respiration, cardiovascular, and intestinal function and modified immune function. In addition, epidural anesthesia is considered to increase organ perfusion in the splenic area by means of sympathetic blockage [3].

Indocyanine green test (ICG) was initially designed to measure blood flow and then started to be used to assess liver function by means of measuring functional hepatocyte mass. The most frequently used test in clinical practice is numeric liver function test. ICG clearance test is indicated in the assessment and monitoring of liver functions in the liver transplant recipients and donors [4].

Our goal of the present study was to compare the efficacy of thoracic epidural anesthesia (TEA) compared with general anesthesia with the use of ICG and liver function tests.

#### **METHODS**

This study was performed from January to September 2013 on 40 patients aged 18–55 years in American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) physical status I-II who had undergone general anesthesia for liver transplant right hepatectomy at the Department of Anesthesiology and Reanimation, Faculty of Medicine, Inonu University, after the consents of the Malatya Clinical Research Ethical Board (2013/46) and of the patients were obtained. Patients' sex, age, height, smoking, body weight, body mass index, and ASA physical status were recorded. The patients were divided into 2 equal groups: the control group (group I) and the epidural block group (group II, closed envelope method). In the operating room, electrocardiography, oxygen saturation, and noninvasive blood

Table 2. Average Values of the Groups and Intergroup Comparisons of Duration of Operation, Urine, Temperature, Remnant Liver, Graft Weight, and Bleeding Volume

Variable	Group I (n = 20)	Group II (n = 20)	P Value
Duration of anesthesia (min)	$396 \pm 83$	$353\pm71$	.393
Duration of surgery (min)	$345\pm80$	$305\pm74$	.921
Urine output (mL)	$\textbf{1,086} \pm \textbf{477}$	$1,\!062\pm497$	.878
Temperature (°C)	$36.8\pm0.7$	$36.6\pm0.7$	.784
Remnant liver (%)	$32\pm5$	$33\pm4$	.883
Bleeding volume (mL)	$298\pm75$	$330\pm114$	.006
Graft weight (g)	$773\pm142$	$734\pm108$	.379

Note. Values are presented as mean  $\pm$  SD or n. Group I: control; group II:

pressure monitoring were performed and basal hemodynamic values recorded. Bispectral index (BIS) was used to assess depth of anesthesia. In group 2 patients, the epidural catheter was inserted at the T<sub>6-8</sub> level. In all patients, anesthesia was standardized with lidocaine, fentanyl, and thiopental. Patients were intubated after muscle relaxation provided with the use of vecuronium. Anesthesia maintenance, in 50/50% oxygen-air mixture, in group 1 consisted of isoflurane, remifentanil infusion, and cisatracurium infusion, and in group 2 patients isoflurane, epidural infusion, and cisatracurium infusion. Nondominant radial artery invasive arterial blood pressure monitoring was provided. An internal jugular venous catheter was inserted for central venous pressure monitoring in all patients. Patients' mean arterial pressure, heart rate, pulse oximetry, and BIS values were recorded. Pringle maneuver time (if applied), remnant liver, total amount of bleeding, amount of urine, total anesthesia time, total operation time, times of operation phases, total amount of liquid during operation, and type of fluid (crystalloid, colloid, blood, and blood products) were recorded. After transection, the graft weight was also recorded. After antagonizing the effects of muscle relaxants at the end of the operations, patients were extubated. After observed in the postoperative care unit for one-half hour, patients were sent to the surgical intensive care unit. ICG clearance test values before general anesthesia (T0), after induction of general anesthesia (T1), after transection (T2), and at postoperative 24 and 72 hours (T3 and T4) were recorded. Simultaneously, hemoglobin, hematocrit, platelet count, prothrombin time (PT), international normalized ratio (INR), total bilirubin, direct bilirubin, albumin, aspartate transaminase, and alanine transaminase (ALT) values were analyzed.

#### Statistical Analyses

The SPSS 16.0 package program was used in the statistical analyses of the data. With the use of Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test, data belonging to quantitative variables were determined to show normal distribution (P > .05). Paired t test was used to test the change in data during the course of time. Independent t test was used in the intergroup comparisons. Data belonging to quantitative variables are presented as mean  $\pm$  SD, and data belonging to qualitative variables are presented as n (%). P < .05 was considered to be statistically significant.

#### **RESULTS**

Demographic properties of the patients are presented in Table 1. In terms of operation time, percentage of liver remnant, graft weight and amount of bleeding, statistically significant difference was not observed between groups (Table 2). Significant changes in the ALT levels were observed over time within both groups (P < .05), but there no significant difference between groups. PT and INR values were significantly different over time within both groups (P < .05, Table 3). Regarding SAP, MAP and CVP values were significantly different over time within both groups (P < .05, Table 4). Regarding PDR and R15 of ICG, statistically significant difference was not observed between groups (P > .05). In intragroup comparisons of PDR and R15 values at T1, T2, T3, and T4, the values at T0 were statistically significant in both groups (P < .05, Table 5).

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