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Collaborative Review - Bladder Cancer

Enhanced Recovery after Urological Surgery: A Contemporary Systematic Review of Outcomes, Key Elements, and Research Needs

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Abstract

Context: Enhanced Recovery after Surgery (ERAS) programs are multimodal care pathways that aim to decrease intra-operative blood loss, decrease postoperative complications, and reduce recovery times.

Objective: To overview the use and key elements of ERAS pathways, and define needs for future clinical trials.

Evidence acquisition: A comprehensive systematic MEDLINE search was performed for English language reports published before May 2015 using the terms "postoperative period," "postoperative care," "enhanced recovery after surgery," "enhanced recovery," "accelerated recovery," "fast track recovery," "recovery program," "recovery pathway", "ERAS," and "urology" or "cystectomy" or "urologic surgery."

Evidence synthesis: We identified 18 eligible articles. Patient counseling, physical conditioning, avoiding excessive alcohol and smoking, and good nutrition appeared to protect against postoperative complications. Fasting from solid food for only 6 h and perioperative liquid-carbohydrate loading up to 2 h prior to surgery appeared to be safe and reduced recovery times. Restricted, balanced, and goal-directed fluid replacement is effective when individualized, depending on patient morbidity and surgical procedure. Decreased intraoperative blood loss may be achieved by several measures. Deep vein thrombosis prophylaxis, antibiotic prophylaxis, and thermoregulation were found to help reduce postsurgical complications, as was a multimodal approach to postoperative nausea, vomiting, and analgesia. Chewing gum, prokinetic agents, oral laxatives, and an early resumption to normal diet appear to aid faster return to normal bowel function. Further studies should compare anesthetic protocols, refine analgesia, and evaluate the importance of robotassisted surgery and the need/timing for drains and catheters.

Conclusions: ERAS regimens are multidisciplinary, multimodal pathways that optimize postop-

Patient summary: This review provides an overview of the use and key elements of Enhanced Recovery after Surgery programs, which are multimodal, multidisciplinary care pathways that aim to optimize postoperative recovery. Additional conclusions include identifying effective procedures within Enhanced Recovery after Surgery programs and defining needs for future clinical trials.

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1. Introduction

Enhanced recovery after surgery (ERAS) programs are multidisciplinary, multi-element care pathways that aim to standardize and improve perioperative management [1]. The goal of ERAS is to enable a faster and more efficient recovery using evidence-based practices [1]. Studies have shown that ERAS adoption decreases postoperative complications by 50%, reduces length of stay (LOS) by 30%, and decreases readmission rates, thereby lowering health costs [2]. Cultural and bureaucratic barriers have hindered the adoption of ERAS programs in many specialties, including urology. Here, we provide a comprehensive overview of evidence-based interventions utilized in ERAS programs. Our aims are to determine the effectiveness of specific procedures and to provide a basis for future clinical trials.

2. Evidence acquisition

2.1. Search strategy and study selection

We performed a systematic literature review in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses statement (Fig. 1). We used MEDLINE to identify English language articles, reviews, and editorials published prior to May 2015. The search terms and selection strategy details are provided in Figure 1. We scrutinized reference lists of recovered articles, relevant scientific meeting abstracts, and online guideline websites for

additional articles. Original articles, publications within the past 5 yr, and those with the highest level of evidence were preferred. The quality of evidence from the included studies focusing on urological procedures, namely radical cystectomy (RC), was comprehensively assessed using the US Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality method (Table 1).

3. Evidence synthesis

The electronic search yielded 956 potential urological articles, of which 50 were assessed for eligibility (Fig. 1). Until recently, the published ERAS literature has focused primarily on colorectal surgery outcomes. The adoption of ERAS pathways across different surgical disciplines has spread informally, although there have been some notable coordinated initiatives. For example, the UK National Health Service's Enhanced Recovery Partnership Program acted as a catalyst for adoption among surgical specialties. Recently, ERAS guidelines have been developed and published for several surgical procedures [1,3,4]. Guidelines vary by specialty but include at least 20 elements categorized into preoperative, intraoperative, and postoperative components [3].

3.1. Preoperative ERAS elements

3.1.1. Preadmission information and expectation counseling Written, verbal, or electronic counseling about ERAS prior to surgery is important for successful implementation and

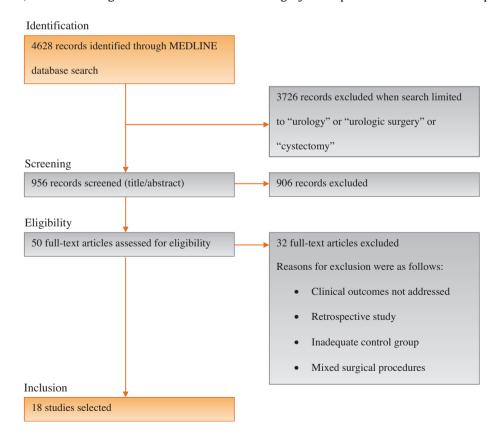


Fig. 1 - Selection process according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses statement.

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