SCIENTIFIC ARTICLE

Comparison of effects on the oxidant/antioxidant system of sevoflurane, desflurane and propofol infusion during general anesthesia

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KEYWORDS
Oxidant; Antioxidant; Propofol; General anesthesia

Abstract
Background and objectives: Desflurane and sevoflurane are frequently used for maintenance of anesthesia and studies have shown that these anesthetics cause a variety of changes to the oxidative stress and antioxidant defense mechanisms. This study aims to compare the effects of sevoflurane, desflurane and propofol infusion anesthesia on the oxidant and antioxidant systems of patients undergoing laparoscopic cholecystectomy.

Methods: 45 patients between 18 and 50 years with planned laparoscopic cholecystectomy under general anesthetic were included in the study. Patients were divided into three groups on the way to surgery: propofol (group P n: 15), sevoflurane (group S n: 15) and desflurane (group D n: 15). All groups were given hypnotic 2 mg/kg propofol IV, 1 mcg/kg fentanyl IV and 0.1 mg/kg vecuronium IV for induction. For maintenance of anesthesia group S were ventilated with 2% sevoflurane, group D cases were given 6% desflurane and group P were given propofol infusions of 12 mg/kg/h for the first 10 min, 9 mg/kg/h for the second 10 min and 6 mg/kg/h after that. Before induction and after the operation venous blood samples were taken to evaluate the levels of glutation peroxidase, total oxidants and antioxidants.

Results and conclusions: The 45 patients included in the study were 22 male and 23 female patients. The demographic characteristics of the groups were similar. In the postoperative period we observed that while sevoflurane and propofol increased antioxidants by a statistically significant level, desflurane increased the total oxidants level by a significant amount compared to levels before the operation.

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Introduction

Free oxygen radicals, on the one hand while they oxidize biological molecules such as the body's building blocks of protein, lipid and DNA, on the other hand they can work against this oxidation as part of the body's natural antioxidant defense system. This situation is balanced under normal physiological conditions. However in a situation of meeting any stress, as a result of increasing antioxidant consumption or free radical creation, many oxidative stresses increase. Many antioxidant molecules are found in the blood to prevent or inhibit the harmful effects of free oxygen radicals. Measurement of total antioxidant and oxidant levels in plasma can be used to determine the oxidative stress reaction of the organism. Desflurane and sevoflurane are frequently used for maintenance of anesthesia and studies have shown that these anesthetics cause a variety of changes to the oxidative stress and antioxidative defense mechanisms. The chemical structure of propofol is similar to some free radical consumers such as endogenous vitamin E and butylated hydroxytoluene.

In this study we aimed to compare the effects of sevoflurane, desflurane and propofol infusion anesthesia on the oxidant and antioxidant systems of patients undergoing laparoscopic cholecystectomy.

Methods

After permission was given by 2009/12 no. decision of Duzce University Medical Faculty Clinical Study Ethics Committee and informed patient consent was obtained, 45 patients ASA I–II between 18 and 50 years with planned laparoscopic cholecystectomy under general anesthetic were included in the study. Patients were divided into three groups on the way to surgery: TIVA (group P n: 15), sevoflurane (group S n: 15) and desflurane (group D n: 15). Patients with endocrine dysfunction, blood transfusion in the previous 2 weeks, signs of infection and inflammation, history of preoperative medication use, anemia, and hemorrhage requiring transfusion during the operation were excluded from the study. After fasting for 8 h all patients in the study were given 1 mg midazolam IV for premedication 30 min before the operation. Patients were taken to the operating room. Routine monitoring with electrocardiogram (ECG), peripheral oxygen saturation (SPO2), and non-invasive blood pressure were done. Later before the operation venous blood was taken to evaluate total oxidant status, total antioxidant status and glutation peroxidase levels.

All groups were given hypnotic 2 mg/kg propofol IV, 1 mcg/kg fentanyl IV and 0.1 mg/kg vecuronium IV for induction. During anesthesia induction cases were oxygenized with 100% O2 at 6 L/min flow rate. After 3 min of controlled ventilation, using an appropriate intubation tube for age and weight, orotracheal intubation was completed. For maintenance of anesthesia, group S were ventilated with 2% sevoflurane, 50% air and 50% O2 mix at 6 L/min flow. Group D cases were given 6% desflurane, 50% air and 50% O2 mix at 6 L/min flow. Group P were given propofol infusions of 12 mg/kg/h for the first 10 min, 9 mg/kg/h for the second 10 min and 6 mg/kg/h after that. Patients were ventilated with 50% air and 50% O2 mix at 6 L/min flow. In all groups
after tidal volume was determined to be 6–8 mg/kg and res-
piration rate was 12, ventilation was begun with an Avance
S/5 anesthesia device. Ten minutes before the expected end
of surgery propofol infusion was ended. When the last skin
suture was being made inhalation agents were shut off. Man-
ual ventilation with 100% O₂ was undertaken. In this period
all parametric readings were taken. After spontaneous respi-
ration began, neuromuscular antagonization was completed
with 0.01 mg/kg atropine and 0.03 mg/kg neostigmine. After
extubation the patient was taken to recovery. Later venous
blood was taken to evaluate total oxidant status, total
antioxidant status and glutation peroxidase levels after the
operation.

Biochemical analysis

Blood samples taken in anticoagulant free vacuum gel tubes
were centrifuged at 2000 × g for 15 min. The serum was por-
tioned into clean tubes. For glutation studies the serum
separated in the tube was deproteinized. For the depro-
teinization procedure 5 g metaphosphoric acid was dissolved
in 50 mL distilled water and 200 µL samples were mixed with
200 µL metaphosphoric acid solution and vortexed. They
were rested at room temperature for 5 min and were cen-
trifuged at 2000 × g for 4 min. The supernatant was carefull-
ly separated to a different tube. This supernatant to mea-
sure glutation and the serum portions designated to measure
other parameters were stored at –80 °C until measurements
could be made. Glutation was measured based on enzymatic
measurements using Cayman (Cayman Inc., Ann Arbor, MI,
USA) commercial kits, which use 5-thio-2-nitrobenzoic acid
(TNB) to react with the DTNB (5,5’-dithio-bis-2-nitrobenzoic
acid) of the sulfhydryl group in GSH glutation reductase
forming a yellow color. On the day of measurement, samples
were thawed and mixed, then prepared 4 M triethanolamine
solution of 10 µL was added to 200 µL samples and vortexed.
After samples were diluted at 1:2 (v/v) ratio with MES buffer,
standards were prepared according to the prospectus. They
were added to 50 µm wells, and the plate was covered with
the lid from within the kit. At this stage, according to the
prospectus an assay cocktail of MES buffer (11.25mL), GSH
co-factor mixture (0.45 mL), GSH enzyme mixture (2.1 mL),
distilled water (2.3 mL), and GSH DTNB (0.45 mL) was pre-
pared and 150 µL freshly-prepared assay cocktail was added
to all wells, the plate was covered and incubated on an orbital
mixer in the dark for 25 min. In the 25th minute mea-
surement was taken using a Bio-Rad 680 Microplate reader
at 405 nm. Total oxidant capacity measurements used a Rel
Assay Kit (Rel Assay Diagnostics, Mega Tip San and Tic Ltd
Sti, Turkey) developed by Erel. This method is based on
oxidants in the sample turning a ferrous iron chelator into
ferric ions, which in an acid environment form a color com-
plex with chromogen and this complex is then measured
spectrophotometrically. Stabilized stock standard solution
(SSSS) was diluted 40,000 times by deionized water then
150 µL or the sample was mixed with 1000 µL reactive I.
First absorbance was measured using a spectrophotome-
ter at 530 nm wavelength. Fifty µL prochromogen solution
was added, mixed and incubated at room temperature for
10 min. Second absorbance was measured at 530 nm.
For calculations the following formulae were used:

\[
TOS = \left( \frac{Δ\text{Absorbance sample}}{Δ\text{Absorbance standard}} \right) \times \text{standard value}
\]

\[
Δ\text{Absorbance sample} = \text{2nd absorbance sample} - \text{1st absorbance sample},
\]

\[
Δ\text{Absorbance standard} = \text{2nd absorbance standard} - \text{1st absorbance standard},
\]

Standard value: 20 μmol H₂O₂ equiv./L.

Statistical analysis

Data were analyzed using the SPSS v 11.5 (SPSS, Inc.,
Chicago, IL, USA) computer program. Distribution of num-
rical data within the groups was evaluated using the
Shapiro–Wilk test. Data with normal distribution are given
as mean ± standard deviation (SD); categorical variables are
given as frequencies. To determine any differences in aver-
age numerical data between the groups the one-way ANOVA
was used. To find groups responsible for significant differ-
ences multivariate analysis used the Scheffe test. Before and
after measurements were analyzed with the paired samples
test as they had normal distribution. Categorical vari-
ables were compared between the groups with the chi-square
test. A p value < 0.05 was accepted as statistically signifi-

Results

Our study comprised a total of 45 patients: 15 were given
sevoflurane, 15 were given desflurane and 15 were given
propofol infusion. Of the 45 patients 22 were male and 23
were female patients. There was no statistical difference
between the patients in the groups in terms of average age,
weight, and anesthesia duration (Table 1) (p > 0.05). Hemo-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1</th>
<th>Demographic characteristics of patients.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>35 ± 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy (kg)</td>
<td>69 ± 9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex (M/F)</td>
<td>9/6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anesthesia time (min)</td>
<td>106 ± 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

M, male; F, female.
In Laparoscopic Baysal Studies General Effects

In dynamic sevoflurane not significantly chemically, TOS TA S GSH-PX groups were increased antioxidant capacity. Furthermore, we found that desflurane significantly increases the total antioxidant capacity. The TAS, TOS and glutation peroxidase levels of patients before and after the operation are shown in Table 2.

Table 2  TAS, TOS and GSH-PX levels of patients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>PREOP</th>
<th>POSTOP</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TAS (mmol/L)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group S</td>
<td>0.6 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.8 ± 0.2</td>
<td>0.02&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>0.8 ± 0.2</td>
<td>0.7 ± 0.2</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group P</td>
<td>0.6 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.7 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.04&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOS (μmol/L)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group S</td>
<td>7.1 ± 4.5</td>
<td>10.5 ± 6.4</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>9.1 ± 4.6</td>
<td>12.6 ± 4.1</td>
<td>0.03&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group P</td>
<td>8.4 ± 6.3</td>
<td>6.4 ± 4.2</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GSH-PX (mmol/L)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group S</td>
<td>0.7 ± 0</td>
<td>0.7 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group D</td>
<td>0.7 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.7 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group P</td>
<td>0.8 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.7 ± 0.1</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> There is statistically significant difference in TAS between the preoperative and postoperative period in groups S and P.

<sup>b</sup> There is statistically significant difference in TOS between the preoperative and postoperative period in group D.

Figure 1  Hemodynamic data from the groups.

Dynamic monitoring of patients was completed during the operation. During this monitoring the patients’ preoperative, intraoperative and postoperative mean blood pressure (MBP) was recorded (Fig. 1). The MBP values of patients in groups S, D and P were similar. It was observed that sevoflurane and propofol significantly increases the total antioxidant capacity. Furthermore we found that desflurane significantly increases the total oxidant capacity.

In recent years many studies on the antioxidant system have been completed, these studies found that the antioxidant system has major effects on patient mortality and morbidity. Anesthetic systems normally work as a whole, protecting cells from the toxic effects of oxygen radicals. This maintains the oxidant and antioxidant systems in the organism in a balanced fashion. In situations where this balance is disrupted toward oxidation, inflammatory mediators and free oxygen radicals are produced by leukocytes. These create lipid peroxidation in cell membranes, damaging DNA and causing disease.

In our study we observed in the desflurane group total oxidant capacity, an indicator of oxidative stress, was statistically increased, while antioxidant capacity was reduced, though not at statistically significant levels. In the sevoflurane group oxidative stress was increased compared to values before the operation, though not significantly,
while antioxidant capacity was statistically significantly increased. Dikmen et al.18 looked at the effect of sevoflurane on the enzymatic antioxidant defense system in the livers of rats and showed that sevoflurane produced an increase in lipid peroxidation before any insufficiency in the enzymatic antioxidant defense system. Allaouchiche et al.19 compared propofol (8 mg/kg/h), desflurane (10%) and sevoflurane (2.5%) to determine oxidative situation in pigs. Pigs were exposed to the anesthetic agents for about 120 min; propofol increased glutation peroxidase levels (GSH-Px) significantly in both bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) fluid and in circulation. Desflurane caused a significant decrease of GSH-Px in both BAL fluid and circulation, while in the sevoflurane group there were no significant changes identified in BAL fluid and in circulation. They stated that oxidative stress due to desflurane anesthesia might be related to extreme increases in proinflammatory cytokines in alveolar macrophages. Sivaci et al.20 used sevoflurane or desflurane on patients undergoing laparoscopic surgery and observed that both agents had cytotoxic effects due to free radical formation. Desflurane changes oxidative stress and antioxidant mechanisms negatively; they stated that the nitrogen mixture used with desflurane might increase this effect even more. Sivaci et al. determined that desflurane reduced serum GSH levels. However we did not identify any effect on serum GSH levels due to either desflurane or propofol.

Propofol has been found to increase the fluidity of the erythrocyte membrane preventing hemolysis, similar to vitamin E, and shows antioxidant activity. Propofol protects erythrocytes from oxidative and physical stress. Ascorbic acid has been shown to make this effect more pronounced. Inversely volatile anesthetics reduce erythrocyte membrane fluidity inducing hemolysis.21 In our study in the propofol infusion group oxidative stress after the operation was reduced compared to values before operation, though not significantly, while at the same time antioxidant capacity was statistically increased after operation. In all three groups statistically significant changes in glutation peroxidase levels were not observed. In the propofol infusion group in the postoperative period they were a little reduced, in the sevoflurane group in the postoperative period they were a little increased while in the desflurane group no changes were observed. In our study in both sevoflurane and propofol infusion groups TAS values after operation were statistically significantly increased compared to values before surgery.

Conclusion

This study gives an idea that in general anesthesia, necessary for a variety of reasons, in cases under oxidative stress the agent that will least damage the antioxidant system, an important cascade in the humoral defense system, and that will have least effect on the immune system should be chosen. Further research into the immune situation of patients receiving general anesthetic and the relationship between oxidant/antioxidant systems are required.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References