THE ROLE OF PECS BLOCKS IN THE ALLEVIATION OF POSTMASTECTOMY PAIN SYNDROME

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Background and Aims This study aimed at investigating the efficacy of PECS Blocks in alleviating symptoms in the immediate post-operative period and in reducing the occurrence of chronic pain following surgical treatment for breast cancer.

Methods We enrolled 64 women who were randomized to the performance or not of PECS Blocks. Evaluation of pain was based on the numerical pain rating scale (NRS) ranging from 0 to 10. In addition, the required supplemental morphine dose in the immediate post-operative period was compared between the two groups. All patients were evaluated at 3 and 6 months after surgery using the DN4 questionnaire for neuropathic pain.

Results The incidence of postmastectomy pain syndrome (DN4 ≥ 4) in the PECS group was 28.1% at 3 months and 3.1% at 6 months, while in the non-PECS group it was 46.9% at 3 months and 28.1% at 6 months, with the difference between the groups being statistically significant at 6 months (p = 0.016). The NRS values at three different time points (immediately postoperatively, at 12 and 24 hours) were higher in the non-PECS group compared with the PECS group and this difference was statistically significant at all three time points (p < 0.001). Significant differences were found in supplemental morphine doses after discharge from PACU and for 24 hours, with the PECS group requiring 1.5 ± 2.48 mg and the non-PECS group requiring nearly four times more (p < 0.01).

Conclusions The peri-operative use of PECS blocks reduced acute postoperative pain, diminished postoperative morphine requirements and lowered the risk of development of chronic pain.

Ethics Committee Approval

APPLICATION FOR ESRA ABSTRACT PRIZES: I apply as an Anesthesiologist (Aged 35 years old or less)

Background and Aims Laparoscopic cholecystectomy (LC) is a common minimally invasive surgery that reduces risks and complications. To manage postoperative pain in LC, different regional anesthesia techniques have been explored. One such technique is the External Oblique Intercostal Plane Block (EOIPB), which is relatively new and lacks clinical trial evidence. This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of EOIPB in managing postoperative pain after LC.

Methods This randomized, controlled trial was conducted from December 2022 to April 2023, with approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and clinical trial registration (NCT05444985). ASA I-III patients aged 35-65 years scheduled for LC were included. All patients received standardized general anesthesia and analgesia. In the experimental group, an ultrasound-guided EOIPB was performed bilaterally using 30 mL of 0.25% bupivacaine at the end of surgery.

Results Comparing the EOIP group and the control group, descriptive statistics showed no significant differences (p > 0.05). However, the EOIP group had significantly higher cumulative tramadol consumption at all time points, except for the first hour (p < 0.001). NRS scores were similar.