

Results for the Study: Ultrasound Guided Fascia Iliaca Block for Postoperative Analgesia after Elective Total Hip Arthroplasty

Introduction

This study took place at Saskatoon City Hospital between June 2014 and January 2015. If you participated in this study, we would again like to thank you, and share what we found.

Background

Total hip replacement can be associated with moderate to severe pain after surgery. Currently, several strategies are used to control pain in patients undergoing this surgery in Saskatoon. These include the administration of spinal anesthetic containing morphine prior to surgery, and oral pain medicine after surgery. There is some evidence that suggests the addition of a fascia iliaca block can help to reduce the amount of pain after surgery, and the need for narcotic pain medication and their accompanying side effects such as nausea, drowsiness, itchiness, difficulty with urination, and constipation. In a fascia iliaca block, medication is injected into the front of your hip to freeze the nerves that are responsible for pain in the hip. The purpose of this study was to see whether this block helps for hip replacement surgeries – specifically whether it would give patients additional pain relief, and reduce the number of side effects due to narcotic pain medications.

Results

We recruited 42 participants in this pilot study (24 males and 18 females). All patients received the standard spinal anesthetic prior to surgery. In addition, 20 patients were randomly assigned to receive a sham fascia iliaca block (with sterile water, no freezing medicine), while 22 patients were randomly assigned to receive a true fascia iliaca block (with freezing medicine). The people who received the true fascia iliaca block before surgery required the same amount of narcotic pain medications to manage their pain within the first 24 hours, and did not report lower pain scores than the group who received the sham block. There was a trend in our data that suggested those who received the true block may have had less pain 12 hours after surgery and took longer to request their first dose of narcotic medication after surgery. However, a larger future study would be needed to determine if this is indeed true.

Conclusion

In this small study, the fascia iliaca block did not provide additional pain relief or reduce the amount of narcotic needed to reduce pain after hip replacement surgery.

If you have any questions, please feel to contact me.

Sincerely,

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