
Endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography: with or without anesthesia?

Krzysztof M. Kuczkowski

Departments of Anesthesiology and Reproductive Medicine, UCSD Medical Center, 200 W. Arbor Drive, San Diego, CA 92103-8770, United States

To the editor: Diagnostic and/or therapeutic endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) in the management of biliopancreatic disorders can be performed safely and effectively in most adult patients without the assistance of anesthesia providers [1,2]. However, in some patients, special anesthesia techniques (e.g., monitored anesthesia care) and/or the presence of anesthesia personnel (e.g., anesthesia nurses) might optimize the patient's condition, comfort, and safety (MB Kuczkowska, personal communication), and reduce the incidence of complications of this routine—although invasive—endoscopic procedure [2].

It is a general consensus that the need for monitored anesthesia care/conscious sedation, including sedation for ERCP, is increasing in digestive endoscopy units [3]. Indeed, Mazzon et al. [4], in a recent study, concluded that the adoption of special conscious sedation/monitored anesthesia care guidelines/protocols, and/or the presence of an anesthesia nurse

might create ideal conditions for the operator (gastroenterologist) and assure the patient's comfort and good results, with a low incidence of undesired events/complications. Mazzon et al. [4] also encourage (consistent with this author's recommendation) anesthesiologists (anesthesia departments) to develop practice guidelines/in-service training and periodic updates for gastroenterologists who opt to perform ERCP without the assistance of anesthesia personnel.

References

1. Rocca R, Castellino F, Daperno M, et al. (2005) Therapeutic ERCP in paediatric patients. *Dig Liver Dis* 37:357–362
2. Amornyotin S, Na-pomphet S, Wongwathanyoo T, Chalayonnavin V (2004) Anesthesia for endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP) from 1999–2003 in Siriraj Hospital: a retrospective study. *J Med Assoc Thai* 87:1491–1495
3. Campo R, Brullet E, Junquera F, et al. (2004) Sedation in digestive endoscopy. Results of a hospital survey in Catalonia (Spain). *Gastroenterol Hepatol* 27:503–507
4. Mazzon D, Germana B, Poole D, et al. (2005) Conscious sedation during endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography: implementation of SIED-SIAARTI-ANOTE guidelines in Belluno Hospital. *Minerva Anestesiol* 71:101–109

Address correspondence to: K. Kuczkowski

Received: July 24, 2006 / Accepted: September 20, 2006