

Evidence Based Anaesthesia for Tonsillectomy

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Tonsillectomy is one of the most frequently performed surgical procedures in children. Anaesthesia for tonsillectomy is the topic of frequent discussion and debate. A substantial body of literature relates to the performance of this anaesthetic. Despite this there are numerous techniques and opinions regarding the ideal tonsillectomy anaesthetic.

A national UK survey of the anaesthetic management of tonsillectomy in 2008 found intravenous induction used by 81% of respondents, intubation used by 79%, with muscle relaxants being used by 47%. Prophylactic ondansetron and dexamethasone were being used by 79 and 70% respectively. 77% of respondents used nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's) [1]

This presentation is going to focus on several key issues presented in the literature that should influence our management of children undergoing tonsillectomy.

- Is there an ideal analgesic combination, and how effective are the commonly used analgesics? [2,3]
- Does the analgesic efficacy of NSAID's outweigh the risk of bleeding from these drugs? [4,5]
- Are local anaesthetic techniques safe or effective? [6,7]
- How does our choice of analgesics impact on the incidence of post operative nausea and vomiting? [8]
- Is there an ideal prophylactic antiemetic regimen?[9,10]
- Are dexamethasone and ondansetron harmless essential prophylactic antiemetics? [11,12]
- Does protocol based anaesthetic care improve outcome from tonsillectomy? [8]

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