Reviewer's report

Title: Comparison of intraoperative blood loss during spinal surgery using either remifentanil or fentanyl as an adjuvant to general anesthesia

Version: 1 Date: 14 August 2013

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View Letter
(20130814)

1. General description:
This is a retrospective clinical study entitled “Comparison of intraoperative blood loss during spinal surgery using either remifentanil or fentanyl as an adjuvant to general anesthesia”. The authors concluded they first showed that intraoperative blood loss during spinal surgery was decreased in patients who received remifentanil as an opioid adjuvant, possibly because of lower intraoperative blood pressure.

2. Major critiques:
There were several major defects in this article. First, the authors haven’t shown the readers the great interest level about this topic because it was a well known fact. The results of this study can’t offer too much information to the readers. Second, the results were not so reliable not only because it was retrospective but also there were some other major confounding factors (for example, different surgeons and anesthetic depth) related to the end-points. Third, the criteria of using ephedrine or nicardipine was not clearly mentioned.

Specific Comments:

1. Results: In Table 2, total fentanyl dose was significantly greater in fentanyl group than in the remifentanil group. It is not reasonable and meaningful to compare the dosage of intraoperative fentanyl (Fentanyl group) with postoperative fentanyl (Remifentanil group). Of course it would be significantly different.

2. Results: In Table 3, the blood loss was significantly lower in remifentanil group. However, postoperative Hgb and Hct levels were lower in the remifentanil group. The blood loss was not compatible with the Hgb and Hct.

4. Table 4 is suggested to be changed into Fig.1.