Reviewer's report

Title: Postoperative compressive neuropathy of the hand - watch out: a case report

Version: 3  Date: 13 April 2015

Reviewer: Pavel Michalek

Which of the following best describes what type of case report this is?: An unexpected event in the course of observing or treating a patient

Has the case been reported coherently?: Yes

Is the case report authentic?: Yes

Is the case report ethical?: Yes

Is there any missing information that you think must be added before publication?: Yes

Is this case worth reporting?: Yes

Is the case report persuasive?: Yes

Does the case report have explanatory value?: Yes

Does the case report have diagnostic value?: No

Will the case report make a difference to clinical practice?: No

Is the anonymity of the patient protected?: Yes

Comments to authors:

This case report describes a temporary compressive postoperative neuropathy (neuropraxia) to the upper extremity in a paediatric patient.

The report is well written, logically structured and it reads well. However, there are some minor comments and other points that should be clarified before acceptance.

Abstract:

There should be reported that the surgical procedure was completely unrelated to the site of the compressive nerve injury.
Introduction:
You use the term "postoperative nerve injury" but this type of injury is most commonly related to the perioperative course. -

- surgical trauma to the nerves, compressive neuropathy in nerve compression to the operating table, extremity rests etc.

On the other hand, your type of temporary nerve injury occurred entirely in the postoperative period.

Case presentation:
I do not understand why the course of anaesthetics is so extensively reported in this case. The drugs administered, as well as management of general anaesthetics was routine for paediatric cases and there were no link (or almost no link) with lately reported postoperative nerve injury.

Discussion:
This kind of neuropathy occurred probably because of following points:
- The parents probably not completely informed about the risk of application of tight things such as watches, jewelleries, wristbands etc. during the postoperative period.
- There could be mild confusion on the side of the child causing bigger tightening of the wristwatch than usually due to the influence of anaesthetic - however sevoflurane was used in this case and the procedure itself was very short - up to 30 mins. Therefore any prolonged effect of sevoflurane should be almost excluded and using desflurane would not have any advantage (Sethi et al., Paediatr Anaesth 2013).

This is only speculative but should be mentioned in the discussion.
- The authors speculate that the influence of anaesthetics could cause deeper level of sleep than normal and the patients therefore was not able to arouse by pain/pressure/pins and needles sensation caused by compression. This should be supported some citations that the depth of sleep may be affected by the choice of anaesthetic agents. - Steinmetz et al., Anesth Analg 2007?

I would expect some key learning point arising from this case - e.g. adding some warning in regards to wristwatch or wristband wearing in the early postoperative period to the Instructions for parents.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests