

Halopropane Anesthesia in Man

Laboratory and Clinical Studies

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In recent years an interesting group of fluorinated compounds has been introduced to anesthesiology. The addition of fluorine to hydrocarbons diminishes flammability as do other halogen atoms. Since fluorine has a lower atomic weight than chlorine or bromine, the volatility of fluorinated compounds is more likely to render them useful as inhalation anesthetic agents. A new compound in this group, 1,1,2,2-tetrafluoro-3-bromo-propane (halopropane) has become available for evaluation. It is a colorless liquid with molecular weight of 195. The specific gravity is 1.81 at 20° C. and 1.805 at 25° C.; the index of refraction n_D^{20} is 1.3558; vapor pressure in mm. of mercury is 88 at 20°, 113 at 25°, 145 at 30°, and 181 at 35° C.; heat of vaporization is 43 calories per gram. Approximately 0.4 grams of halopropane are soluble in 100 grams of water. The blood/gas partition coefficient is 5.8, the oil/gas ratio 323 and the oil/water distribution coefficient is 150.¹ The vapor is nonflammable in oxygen with an instantaneous spark at 10 joules and with a hot wire at 950°. Breakdown could not be detected on exposure to soda lime, or with 10 per cent NaOH at 80° C. The compound was not decomposed during 20 hours exposure to a 275-watt sun lamp. The liquid has a pleasant odor and is nonirritating to the respiratory tract.

Preliminary evaluation of halopropane has been carried out at the Haskell Laboratory and by Fabian and his co-workers.² The former anesthetized eight dogs for two hours for five consecutive days. Microscopic sec-

tions of lung, spleen, pancreas, adrenal glands, kidneys, spinal cord, bone marrow and liver showed no pathologic changes. Fabian's group studied the effects of halopropane in 56 unmedicated dogs. Bromsulphalein retention was determined in 15. Only one animal had more than 5 per cent retention in twenty-four hours. Both depolarizing and nondepolarizing relaxing agents afforded satisfactory muscle relaxation without change in blood pressure. Methoxamine and phenylephrine increased the blood pressure without production of arrhythmias. Ephedrine and desoxyephedrine each produced premature ventricular systoles. Epinephrine and norepinephrine caused ventricular fibrillation.

Eight of the 56 dogs were given halopropane for three to four hours on each of six consecutive days. They were killed with an overdose (10 per cent) of halopropane. Studies of the fixed tissues revealed no pathologic changes.

Bronchospasm was absent during induction. The pulse rate usually increased moderately. Arrhythmias occurred in 24 per cent of the animals; most were nodal rhythms; 5 per cent were bigeminal rhythms which disappeared with artificial ventilation. Hypotension occurred during deep anesthesia, but the blood pressure was close to normal in light surgical anesthesia. The contractile force of the heart determined with a Walton-Brodie strain gauge was lowered approximately 15 to 20 per cent in light anesthesia, and as much as 50 per cent in deep anesthesia. Evidence of intercostal weakening was seen when the EEG depth was stage III. Respiratory arrest occurred with 7 per cent halopropane. Adequate surgical anesthesia was obtained at 1.5 per cent concentration.

After obtaining the above data, Fabian and associates² successfully administered halopro-

Received from the Division of Anesthesiology and Cardiovascular Pulmonary Laboratory, University of Colorado Medical Center, Denver, Colorado; accepted for publication December 12, 1962. This work was done while Dr. Vogel was under the tenure of a postdoctoral fellowship, National Heart Institute, United States Public Health Service, Bethesda, Maryland.

pane to more than two hundred patients undergoing operation. After consultation with these workers, we administered halopropane to normal healthy volunteers to determine its effect on the respiratory and cardiovascular systems. Its effectiveness as an anesthetic agent in the operating room was then observed.

Methods

Eight healthy young male volunteers ranging from 21 to 29 years of age were anesthetized with halopropane without surgical intervention. After a 16-hour fast, each subject received 0.4 mg. of scopolamine hydrobromide intravenously. ECG leads were attached. A no. 18 Coumand needle was placed in the brachial artery, and a length of polyethylene 90 tubing was introduced proximally through an antecubital vein. Respiratory rate, tidal volume, blood pressure and pulse were measured. Sufficient practice was done in measuring normal ventilation so that a reproducible minute volume could be obtained. Cardiac output was measured in duplicate by the indicator-dilution technique using indocyanine green. Arterial pressure was recorded directly via the brachial artery.

The subjects were then allowed to breathe increasing concentrations of halopropane and oxygen from a closed circle absorption system until sufficiently anesthetized for endotracheal intubation. The agent was vaporized in a Foregger copper kettle. No relaxant or other anesthetic was used. Electroencephalographic leads were attached as soon as unconsciousness had been attained. Halopropane in concentrations up to 6 per cent was utilized for induction. Following tracheal intubation, halopropane was volatilized with air in a non-rebreathing system with the subjects breathing spontaneously. The concentration of halopropane was regulated so that an EEG level of burst suppression was barely attained; this required approximately 2 per cent halopropane (equal to 1.7 per cent at sea level), as calculated from the vapor pressure and flow meters. When burst suppression first appeared, measurements of ventilation, blood pressure, pulse and cardiac output were made. The anesthetic gas flow was maintained thereafter at this concentration. Upon completion of the measurements, controlled respiration was

begun, maintaining minute volume at the control level with a mechanical respirator, and using a larger tidal volume and slower rate than the patient had practiced spontaneously. When a steady state of blood pressure, pulse and EEG had been reached and maintained for twenty minutes, measurements were repeated. Finally, the lungs were hyperventilated for about twenty minutes to eliminate the drug and the subjects were allowed to awaken.

The effects of halopropane anesthesia on hepatic and renal function were determined in twelve patients scheduled for operation. Control preoperative measurements were made of Bromsulphalein (BSP) retention,² bleeding time,³ clotting time,⁴ blood glucose,⁵ blood volume,⁷⁻⁸ blood urea and urea clearance⁹ on the day before operation. The patients were given premedication, generally with 100 mg. meperidine and 0.4 mg. 70 kg. of scopolamine, subcutaneously one and one-half hours before anesthesia. Induction was carried out with thiopental intravenously, followed by 40 mg. of succinylcholine intravenously for tracheal intubation. A flow of 500 ml. each of nitrous oxide and oxygen was used, and halopropane was added to maintain surgical anesthesia. For one hour before operation halopropane was given and respiration assisted to maintain adequate tidal exchange; blood volume, hematocrit, glucose, pH, carbon dioxide, and urea determinations were then repeated. Determinations of arterial pH and carbon dioxide were made about two hours postoperatively. Electrocardiograms were recorded intermittently throughout. Bromsulphalein retention and urea clearance were also determined the next day.

Thirty additional patients were anesthetized with this drug during operation. Electrocardiographic determinations were made, but no blood constituents were measured.

Results

Duplicate determinations of cardiac output were in close agreement. Table I indicates that cardiac output was not significantly altered from normal during halopropane anesthesia in the volunteer subjects. The appearance time of the dye was significantly shorter when halopropane was used. In addition, the

TABLE 1. Halopropane Anesthesia (Eight Volunteers)

	Cardiac Output (liters/minute)			Systolic Blood Pressure (mm. Hg)			Venous Pressure (mm. Hg)			Pulse (beats/minute)		
	C	S	A	C	S	A	C	S	A	C	S	A
Range	1.8-7.1	0.1-9.9	1.3-8.6	100-136	64-110	64-100	6-8	6-18	5-9.5	57-92	80-100	80-109
Mean	5.91	6.74	5.91	118	92	81	6.9	8.9	7.7	73	91	96
Std. Dev.	1.0	1.7	1.1	12.1	13.7	13.8	1.1	3.9	1.8	12	7.2	13.0
SE ₁	.39	.64	.52	4.7	5.2	5.2	.35	1.5	.68	4.5	2.7	4.9
	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.				N.S.	N.S.	N.S.			
	C, S, C, A, P, < .001 S, A, N.S.						C, S, C, A, P, < .001 S, A, N.S.					
	Dye Appearance Time (seconds)			Peripheral Resistance			Oxygen Uptake (ml./minute)			Carbon Dioxide Output (ml./minute)		
	C	S	A	C	S	A	C	S	A	C	S	A
Range	0.5-13.1	5.5-7.1	5.8-8.1	708-1,407	396-832	561-1,100	200-276	151-121	117-366	119-190	91-236	136-318
Mean	9.90	6.20	6.99	1,100	701	773	212	241	216	172	160	210
Std. Dev.	2.32	.68	.90	249	152	208	31.7	93.0	78.5	16.1	61.7	60.1
SE ₁	.88	.26	.31	91	58	85	11.2	11.9	35.1	7.2	27.6	27.0
							N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
	C, A, C, S, P, < .001 S, A, N.S.			C, S, P, < .001, S, A, N.S. C, A, P, < .01								
	Minute Volume (liters)			Elapsed Times			Minutes					
	C	S	A				Range	Average				
Range	1.11-6.65	5.2-6.11	1.85-8.38	Start to Intubation			16-52	32				
Mean	5.16	5.54	6.11	Time before cardiac output on spontaneous respiration			12-80	61				
Std. Dev.	1.14	.29	1.11	Time between determinations on spontaneous and controlled respiration			29-65	29				
SE ₁	.43	.11	.53	Time from last determination until recovery			130-217	200				
	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.									

C = Control, S = Spontaneous Breathing, A = Artificial Ventilation.

blood pressure was lower than normal whether ventilation was spontaneous or assisted. The pulse rate increased and the calculated peripheral resistance decreased. Ventilation, when spontaneous, became rapid and shallow, but with no change in minute volume. There was a tendency for less carbon dioxide to be eliminated and for blood pH to fall. Premature ventricular contractions and episodes of bigeminy were frequent during spontaneous ventilation. When intermittent positive-pressure breathing was begun with an increased tidal volume, the alveolar ventilation improved, even though the minute volume remained nearly identical and carbon dioxide elimination was increased. This also resulted in disappearance of the arrhythmias. Blood pressure remained diminished so long as the inhaled concentration of halopropane was constant. Waking was slow. The subjects remained lethargic for at least three hours after

anesthesia, even though a twenty-minute period of hyperventilation had been used to eliminate the anesthetic drug.

Table 2 shows the blood volume, blood glucose, blood urea, and bleeding and clotting times in the surgical patients. The only differences before and after halopropane were the slightly lower pH values obtained postoperatively. The depth of halopropane anesthesia was less than that obtained in the volunteer group.

The remaining thirty patients who received halopropane had no untoward effects, unless the abnormal electrocardiograms of two are included in this category. Anesthesia was smooth, and prolonged waking periods were avoided by discontinuing anesthesia thirty minutes prior to the end of operation. Nitrous oxide perhaps enabled operation to proceed with less halopropane than when used with oxygen alone. Depth of anesthesia was com-

As implied, with adequate pulmonary ventilation, halopropane could be used safely. When used with nitrous oxide the blood pressure drops were not significant. In some cases when nitrous oxide was an adjuvant, only low concentrations of halopropane were required, and respiration increased so that the impression was gained that halopropane seemed to be a respiratory stimulant. The drug acts entirely too slowly for application without some other induction agent. It appears to have excellent analgesic qualities, for the surgeon may make an incision while the patient is still "light," and elicit no untoward response. This is in contrast to halothane.¹⁶

Summary

Halopropane was administered to eight volunteers without supplemental agents. Cardiac output, venous pressure, oxygen uptake, carbon dioxide output, and respiratory minute volume revealed no significant changes whether the subjects breathed spontaneously or were artificially ventilated. Blood pressure was consistently diminished under these circumstances. During spontaneous ventilation tidal volume decreased and bigeminal rhythms were frequent; these cleared with assisted ventilation. Induction time was impractically long, and recovery time of considerable duration.

Twelve surgical patients were anesthetized for one hour before operation with halopropane and 50 per cent nitrous oxide after thiopental induction. Blood volume, hematocrit, blood glucose, blood urea, blood carbon dioxide, bleeding and clotting times were unaltered as were BSP retention and urea clearance the following day.

Electrocardiograms made on 30 additional subjects undergoing halopropane-nitrous oxide anesthesia with assisted ventilation were virtually all within normal limits. With adequate ventilation, therefore, halopropane was a useful anesthetic in operations of reasonable duration.

Support for this work was supplied by the Organic Chemical Division, du Pont de Nemours Company, Wilmington, Delaware.

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