

Anesthesiology
64:670, 1986

In reply:—The authors appreciate Dr. Murphy's comments. The patient studied was a young man with no history of medical problems. He was given intravenous saline prior to the block and kept supine after the local anesthetic was injected, which may explain the stable vital signs. Twenty ml of local anesthetic is adequate to account for the number of dermatomes blocked. The clinical examination by pin prick was consistent with the anesthetic spread demonstrated by the nuclear scan. The patient was alert, very cooperative, and would consistently reproduce the same clinical examination to pin prick with different authors. He also demonstrated return of sensation between anesthetic doses. We would like to point out that the radionuclide imaging is done *in vivo* and is therefore more physiologic than cadaver studies. We have used it to study the initial distribution of anesthetics in six common nerve blocks. The technique is sensitive, as it easily demonstrates the distribution of 1–2 ml of anesthetic mixture. The radionuclide imaging results have consistently correlated well with the clinical examination of patients we have studied.

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We have undertaken an *in-vivo* study of the distribution of local anesthetics during intercostal blockade and have presently studied more than 15 patients. When "subpleural" spread has occurred, it has been readily demonstrated with our imaging technique. In our series we have seen the local anesthetic solution spread in several different patterns. Our full data on the intercostal block will be submitted for publication in the near future.

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Anesthesia Bulletin Board System

To the Editor:—For the past six years, the Department of Anesthesia at the University of Iowa has maintained an electronic bulletin board system (BBS) that is accessible *via* telephone lines. The BBS permits electronic mail and exchange of computer programs and data and supports both 300 and 1200 baud at even or odd parity. The phone number for access is (319) 353-6528 and is available during nonbusiness hours. The BBS is free, except for the

long distance charges accumulated in calling Iowa City, and open to all users.

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