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## Comparison of Ketanserin and Sodium Nitroprusside in Patients with Severe ARDS

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Pulmonary artery hypertension (PAH) due to an increased pulmonary vascular resistance is a common event in adult respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS).<sup>1</sup>

PAH increases right ventricular afterload, and may lead to right ventricular dysfunction.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, PAH enhances the accumulation of extravascular lung water<sup>3</sup> by increasing the net microvascular filtration pressure.<sup>4</sup> Because of these potentially deleterious effects, therapy with vasodilators, especially with sodium nitroprusside (SNP), has been attempted both in animal models<sup>5</sup> and in patients with ARDS.<sup>6,7</sup> The clinical use of vasodilators has been limited, however, because pulmonary vasodilation usually impairs gas exchange.

Serotonin, which is released by activated platelets, is a putative mediator of PAH associated with ARDS,<sup>8</sup> because pulmonary platelet entrapment can occur in acute respiratory failure.<sup>9</sup> Ketanserin, a specific receptor antagonist of serotonin,<sup>10</sup> is able to moderately decrease pulmonary artery pressure (PAP) when infused in patients with ARDS.<sup>11,12</sup> Surprisingly, the hemodynamic changes occurred without the expected detrimental effects on gas exchange. To further explain the hemodynamic and gas exchange alterations induced by ketanserin, we used pulmonary artery catheterization and the multiple inert gas elimination technique to define gas

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exchange during ketanserin infusion in patients with severe ARDS. We also compared the changes induced by ketanserin to those of SNP, a known pulmonary vasodilator.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Six consecutive patients (age  $43.5 \pm 18.3$ ) without a history of previous lung disease were selected for this study. They met the clinical and radiological criteria for the diagnosis of ARDS:<sup>13</sup> 1) a ratio of arterial  $P_{O_2}$  to inspired oxygen fraction of less than 150; 2) a chest radiograph showing bilateral and diffuse parenchymal opacities; and 3) a compatible underlying disease (sepsis and/or infection).

All patients had pulmonary hypertension with a mean PAP equal to or greater than 25 mmHg. They were mechanically ventilated *via* an endotracheal tube with a volume-cycled ventilator (BEAR 1<sup>®</sup>, Bourns Inc., Riverside, CA) with a tidal volume (VT) of 10–12 ml/kg body weight at a respiratory rate of 16–18 breaths per minute and a mean  $FI_{O_2}$  of .81 (range .62–.99). The patients had thermodilution pulmonary artery catheters (Edwards<sup>®</sup> model 39A–131–7F, Santa Ana, CA) and radial or femoral arterial catheters inserted for continuous pressure recordings. Throughout the study, no cardiotoxic or vasoactive drug was administered. All patients were sedated with intravenous fentanyl and flunitrazepam and paralyzed with pancuronium. According to the principles embodied in the Declaration of Helsinki, informed consent was obtained from next of kin before each study.

The following measurements were obtained in each patient: 1) tidal volume (VT) and minute ventilation (VE) using a calibrated spirometer (SE 302, Ohmeda<sup>®</sup>, Maurepas, France); 2)  $P_{O_2}$  of a gas sample from the inspiratory limb of the ventilator (ABL 30, Radiometer<sup>®</sup>, Copenhagen); arterial (a) and mixed venous pH,  $O_2$  and  $CO_2$  partial pressures (ABL 30); total hemoglobin and hemoglobin oxygen saturation ( $SO_2$ ) by spectrophotometry (OSM 2, Hemoximeter, Radiometer, Copenhagen); 3) systemic and pulmonary vascular pressures (Hewlett-Packard transducers, model 1290 A, Andover, MA); cardiac output using a thermodilution cardiac output computer (Edwards, model 9520 A), the values reported being the mean of four to five determinations injecting dextrose at ambient temperature; and 4) continuous ventilation/perfusion ( $\dot{V}_A/\dot{Q}$ ) distributions using the multiple inert gas elimination technique of Wagner *et al.*<sup>14</sup> as described previously.<sup>15</sup>

Systemic (SVRI) and pulmonary (PVRI) vascular resistance indices were calculated by standard formulas:

$$SVRI = (SAP - RAP)/CI$$

$$PVRI = (PAP - PAWP)/CI,$$

where SAP is the mean systemic arterial pressure, PAP the mean pulmonary artery pressure, RAP the right atrial pressure, PAWP the pulmonary artery wedge pressure, and CI the cardiac index.

Venous admixture was calculated according to Berggren's formula<sup>16</sup> after computing the alveolar  $P_{O_2}$  with the alveolar gas equation.

#### PROTOCOL

Three successive sets of measurements were obtained while the levels of PEEP and  $FI_{O_2}$  were unchanged from maintenance values used before the study. Baseline values of hemodynamics, gas exchange, and inert gas elimination were measured prior to drug infusion. SNP infusion was then started ( $0.5\text{--}1.5 \mu\text{g}/\text{kg} \cdot \text{min}$ ), and the infusion rate was adjusted to achieve a 30% (range 26–41%) reduction of mean systemic arterial pressure. Data were collected after 20 min had elapsed in stable conditions. Then SNP was discontinued, and, after another 20 min, hemodynamic measurements were obtained to assure that the patient had returned to the control values of the first data acquisition and that no rebound effects had occurred. Ketanserin was then administered as an iv bolus of 10 mg injected in 60 s, followed by an infusion at incremental rate over 30 min until a systemic blood pressure reduction equivalent to that which occurred during SNP infusion was obtained. Infusion rates up to  $0.5 \text{ mg} \cdot \text{kg}^{-1} \cdot \text{h}^{-1}$  were required to obtain this effect. When stable conditions had been established, the third set of data was collected. The sequence of the drug administration was dictated by the longer and unpredictable half-life of ketanserin compared to SNP in our patients, which did not allow a cross-over study design.

Statistical evaluation was performed with a non-parametric Wilcoxon rank-sign test.<sup>17</sup> Significance was assumed if  $P < 0.05$ .

#### RESULTS

Table 1 summarizes the hemodynamic and gas exchange effects of the SNP and ketanserin infusions in comparison to the control values. Both drugs provided equivalent reduction of SAP and of systemic vascular resistance index without altering cardiac output. Ketanserin did not alter the right atrial or the pulmonary artery wedge pressure, while SNP caused a significant fall of the PAWP without change of RAP. SNP infusion decreased mean PAP, from  $30.7 \pm 3.0$  to  $23.2 \pm 3.9$  mmHg ( $P < 0.05$ ) and pulmonary vascular resistance index (PVRI) from  $5.1 \pm 1.8$  to  $4.2 \pm 1.9$  mmHg  $\cdot \text{min} \cdot \text{m}^2/1$  ( $P < 0.05$ ). Ketanserin slightly decreased mean PAP in all patients (to  $27.8 \pm 3.9$  mmHg,  $P < 0.05$ ), but did not alter the mean PVRI: PVRI

TABLE 1. Hemodynamic and Gas Exchange Data

	Control	SNP	Ketanserin
SAP (mmHg)	90.2 ± 26.2	62.7 ± 18.8*	65.0 ± 12.6*
RAP (mmHg)	8.7 ± 3.2	6.3 ± 3.9	9.8 ± 3.8
PAP (mmHg)	30.7 ± 3.0	23.2 ± 3.9*	27.9 ± 3.9*
PAWP (mmHg)	11.5 ± 2.7	7.5 ± 3.6*	7.3 ± 3.7
CI (l · min <sup>-1</sup> · m <sup>-2</sup> )	4.0 ± 1.1	4.0 ± 1.0	4.1 ± 1.2
SVRI (mmHg · min · m <sup>2</sup> /l)	22.9 ± 13.4	15.5 ± 8.8*	15.6 ± 6.8*
PVRI (mmHg · min · m <sup>2</sup> /l)	5.1 ± 1.8	4.2 ± 1.9*	4.9 ± 2.4
Pa <sub>O</sub> <sub>2</sub> (mmHg)	102.5 ± 48.9	65.5 ± 14.7*	87.3 ± 25.5
Pa <sub>CO</sub> <sub>2</sub> (mmHg)	38.0 ± 9.5	39.6 ± 9.9*	39.0 ± 10.7
P $\bar{V}$ O <sub>2</sub> (mmHg)	41.2 ± 6.6	37.5 ± 5.4	41.2 ± 5.4
$\dot{V}$ O <sub>2</sub> (l · min <sup>-1</sup> · m <sup>-2</sup> )	113.7 ± 26.2	105.4 ± 16.0	107.6 ± 17.5
$\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$ (%)	41.7 ± 11.0	52.4 ± 9.6*	45.7 ± 8.5

All data are mean ± SD. SAP = systemic arterial pressure; RAP = right atrial pressure; PAP = pulmonary artery pressure; PAWP = pulmonary artery wedge pressure; CI = cardiac index; SVRI = systemic vascular resistance indice; PVRI = pulmonary vascular resis-

tance indice; P $\bar{V}$ O<sub>2</sub> = mixed venous P<sub>O</sub><sub>2</sub>;  $\dot{V}$ O<sub>2</sub> = calculated oxygen consumption;  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$  = venous admixture.

\* Significant difference ( $P < 0.05$ ) for comparison between drug infusion and control values.

decreased in four patients; but, in the remaining two patients, the PAWP decreased, while CI decreased slightly, and an increased PVRI was computed.

SNP caused a dramatic fall of the arterial P<sub>O</sub><sub>2</sub> (Pa<sub>O</sub><sub>2</sub>) from 102.5 ± 48.0 to 65.5 ± 14.7 mmHg ( $P < 0.05$ ), while venous admixture ( $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$ ) increased from 41.7 ± 11.0 to 52.4 ± 9.6 ( $P < 0.05$ ). In contrast, ketanserin had no effect on Pa<sub>O</sub><sub>2</sub> and  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$  did not increase significantly. Neither drug significantly altered the mixed venous P<sub>O</sub><sub>2</sub> (P $\bar{V}$ O<sub>2</sub>). The arterial P<sub>CO</sub><sub>2</sub> increased slightly during SNP infusion, from 38.0 ± 9.5 to 39.6 ± 9.9 mmHg ( $P < 0.05$ ), whereas it remained unchanged during ketanserin administration.

The inert gas analysis demonstrated that the high level of venous admixture in our patients (range 30.8–56.4%) was due to an increased right-to-left shunt ( $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$ ) alone ( $n = 3$ ), or a combination of shunt and of a perfusion fraction to low  $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$  areas ( $n = 3$ ) which ranged from 11.8–19.5% of the cardiac output. SNP infusion resulted in a marked increase of the  $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$  (from 33.6 ± 13.2 to 42.4 ± 10.5%) (table 2), whereas the fractions of perfusion to low  $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$  areas or to the central  $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$  area were not significantly altered (fig. 1). The  $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$  distribution was essentially unchanged during ketanserin infusion;  $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$  increased in one pa-

tient, whereas it remained unchanged or decreased in the other patients. Dead space ( $V_D/V_T$ ) increased during SNP infusion from 45.9 ± 7.5 to 51.8 ± 10.3%. A slight, but significant increase of  $V_D/V_T$  to 48.5 ± 9.0% was noted during ketanserin infusion.

## DISCUSSION

Probable causes of pulmonary artery hypertension which occurs in ARDS include microembolism<sup>18</sup> and diffuse vasoconstriction.<sup>7</sup> This study was designed to compare, in the same group of patients, the effects on pulmonary hemodynamics and gas exchange of SNP, a potent vasodilator acting on vascular smooth muscle, and of ketanserin, a specific serotonin receptor antagonist, at doses achieving a comparable systemic vasodilating effect. This approach, and the use of the multiple inert gas elimination technique allowed us to selectively study their respective effects on pulmonary hemodynamics and explain the concomitant alterations of  $V_A/\dot{Q}$  distribution. A comparison of the two drugs at doses achieving similar pulmonary vasodilation would have provided a more direct comparison of their respective effects on gas exchange, but this approach was not practical due to the limited effects of ketanserin and

TABLE 2. Inert Gas Elimination Data

	Control	SNP	Ketanserin
$\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$	33.6 ± 13.2	42.4 ± 10.5*	33.3 ± 10.5
Low $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$	8.5 ± 9.7	3.8 ± 8.2	8.8 ± 5.9
Central $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$	55.8 ± 7.8	50.6 ± 8.5	56.2 ± 6.8
$V_D/V_T$	45.9 ± 7.5	51.8 ± 10.3*	48.5 ± 9.0*

All data are mean ± SD.  $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$  = right-to-left shunt; low  $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$  = perfusion fraction to areas with  $0.005 < \dot{V}A/\dot{Q} < 0.1$ ; central  $\dot{V}A/\dot{Q}$  = perfusion fraction to areas with  $0.1 < \dot{V}A/\dot{Q} < 10$ ;  $V_D/V_T$

= dead-space.

\* Significant difference ( $P < 0.05$ ) when drug infusion is compared to control values.

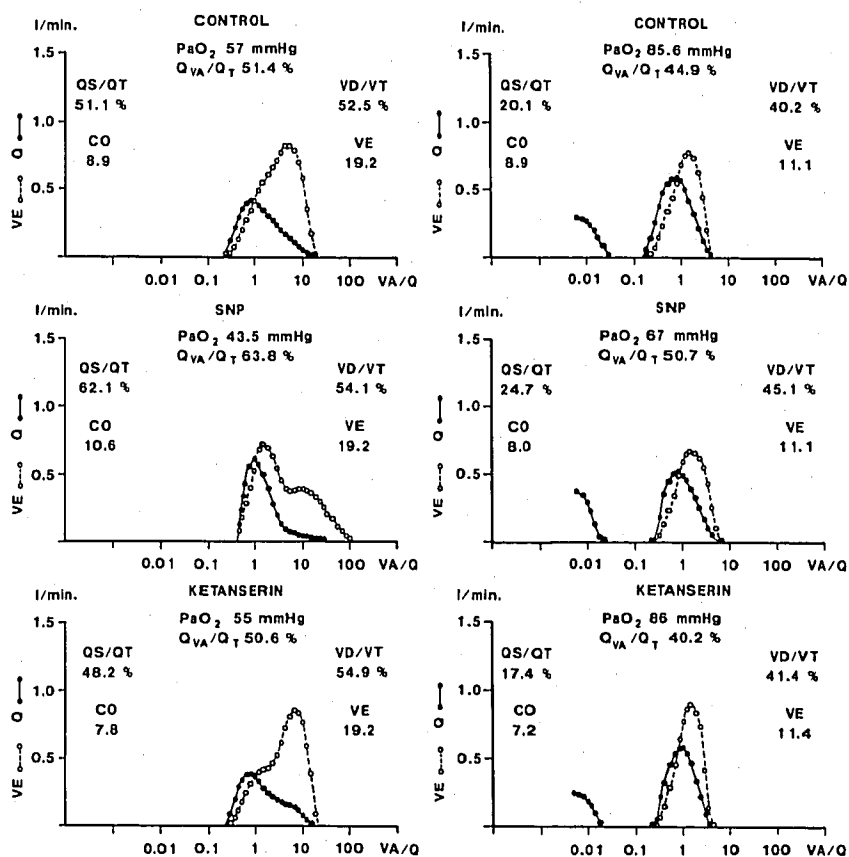


FIG. 1. Inert gas studies of two patients showing two different patterns of  $\dot{V}_A/Q$  distribution under control conditions (above) and during SNP (middle) and ketanserin infusion (below). On the left are the data from a patient with only true shunt ( $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$ ) causing the large venous admixture ( $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$ ); on the right are data from another patient in whom shunt is associated with low  $\dot{V}_A/Q$  regions. Note the absence of change of  $\dot{V}_A/Q$  distribution during ketanserin infusion and the increase restricted to shunt ( $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$ ) during SNP infusion.

its long half-life, which did not allow us to study ketanserin first. Infusing either drug resulted in a significant decrease of the mean PAP, although, at doses causing equal systemic vasodilation, ketanserin was a less potent pulmonary vasodilator than SNP. Thus, a reversible component of pulmonary vasoconstriction must have contributed to the pulmonary hypertension in our patients, since vasodilators are unlikely to reduce pulmonary hypertension secondary to microvascular destruction, as occurs in the advanced stages of ARDS.<sup>7</sup> Ketanserin may have lowered PAP by two mechanisms: the inhibition of serotonin and/or the blockade of  $\alpha_1$ -adrenergic receptors, as suggested by Fozard.<sup>19</sup> At the dosage we used, both mechanisms may account for the hemodynamic effect of ketanserin.<sup>20</sup> Whatever the mechanisms involved, the fact that ketanserin induced less pulmonary artery dilation than SNP suggests that vasoconstrictor agents other than serotonin, such as thromboxane<sup>21</sup> or leukotrienes,<sup>22</sup> are also responsible for the pulmonary hypertension in ARDS.

All of our patients had a large venous admixture which was attributed by inert gas analysis to both shunt alone or a combination of shunt and low  $\dot{V}_A/Q$  areas. These data are similar to those reported by Matamis *et al.*<sup>15</sup> and by Ralph *et al.*,<sup>23</sup> who analyzed the effect of

PEEP ventilation in ARDS patients. The marked increase of venous admixture we measured during SNP infusion in our patients confirms data obtained from a canine model of oleic acid-induced lung injury<sup>24</sup> and in patients with ARDS.<sup>6,7</sup> The inert gas elimination analysis showed that the increased venous admixture caused by SNP in our patients was due to a significant increase of the right-to-left shunt, whereas the perfusion fraction to the low  $\dot{V}_A/Q$  area was unchanged (fig. 1). In a canine model of ARDS induced by oleic acid,<sup>25</sup> Colley *et al.* obtained similar results. In some of the dogs, SNP infusion caused little effect on  $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$ , but increased perfusion to the low  $\dot{V}_A/Q$  area; whereas, in other animals, the right-to-left shunt increased during SNP infusion.

In our patients, SNP did not alter two of the important determinants of  $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$ , cardiac output,<sup>26</sup> and  $\bar{P}\dot{V}O_2$ .<sup>27</sup> These results, and the reduction of the perfusion to the central  $\dot{V}_A/Q$  area, suggest that the increase of the right-to-left shunt was due to a redistribution of pulmonary blood flow to unventilated lung regions. This shift of the pulmonary blood flow distribution is probably due to the inhibition of hypoxic pulmonary vasoconstriction, as demonstrated during one-lung anesthesia.<sup>28</sup> The shift of pulmonary blood flow to hypo-

and unventilated lung regions also explains the increased dead space ventilation during SNP infusion. Furthermore, the reduction of mean PAP probably partly derecruited the pulmonary vasculature, increasing zone I areas and, thus, alveolar dead space. As total minute ventilation and cardiac output did not change throughout the study, the increased dead space resulted in a significant increase of  $\text{PaCO}_2$ .

The multiple inert gas analysis showed that ketanserin infusion dilated the pulmonary vascular bed without notably altering  $\dot{V}_A/\dot{Q}$  matching. The statistically non-significant increase in  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$  (to  $45.7 \pm 8.5\%$ ) during ketanserin infusion (table 1) was probably due to an increased  $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$  in one patient, whereas it remained unchanged or decreased in the other patients. Vincent *et al.*<sup>11</sup> and Olson<sup>20</sup> hypothesized that ketanserin may relieve airway constriction in hypoventilated lung areas. Alveolar ventilation in such regions would then be improved, compensating for a pulmonary vasodilator effect, thereby providing an unchanged  $\dot{V}_A/\dot{Q}$  distribution. With the central  $\dot{V}_A/\dot{Q}$  area unchanged during ketanserin infusion, the increase of dead space ventilation was too small to yield a significant change of  $\text{PaCO}_2$ .

Our results that ketanserin did not increase  $\text{PaO}_2$  or reduce  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$  differ from previous studies.<sup>11,12</sup> This may be due to the greater severity of acute lung injury in our patients; whereas they had a mean  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$  of 41.7%, with the lowest value over 30%, the mean  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$  values in the studies of Vincent *et al.*<sup>11</sup> and Huval *et al.*<sup>12</sup> were 27%. Severe pulmonary microvascular injury may lessen the responsiveness to ketanserin, or perhaps ketanserin is no longer effective as a pulmonary vasodilator in advanced ARDS. This hypothesis was suggested by Huval *et al.*,<sup>12</sup> who noted that ketanserin was ineffective when administered to patients whose tracheas were intubated for more than 4 days. Huet *et al.*<sup>29</sup> observed a decrease in  $\dot{V}\text{O}_2$  during ketanserin infusion in patients with acute pulmonary embolism, and suggested that this may beneficially influence arterial oxygenation. In our patients, the calculated  $\dot{V}\text{O}_2$  did not vary throughout the study.

We conclude that SNP efficiently lowers PAP in patients with severe ARDS, indicating that pulmonary vasoconstriction persists, even in the advanced stage of the disease. Its clinical use, however, cannot be recommended because SNP markedly impairs pulmonary gas exchange by increasing  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$ . The increased  $\dot{Q}_{VA}/\dot{Q}_T$  is caused by an increased  $\dot{Q}_S/\dot{Q}_T$  due to a redistribution of pulmonary blood flow. Possibly because a less potent pulmonary vasodilator than SNP, ketanserin has no deleterious effects on gas exchange. Ketanserin administration may be useful in patients

with ARDS, especially when given early in the course of the disease.

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## The Influence of Fentanyl and Tracheal Intubation on the Hemodynamic Effects of Anesthesia Induction with Propofol/N<sub>2</sub>O in Humans

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Previous studies on the hemodynamic effects of anesthesia induction with propofol, a phenol derivative (2,6-diisopropylphenol) have reported a significant decrease of both systolic and diastolic arterial pressure in heavily sedated patients with coronary artery disease<sup>1</sup> and in patients with aortic and mitral valve disorders.<sup>2</sup> In these studies, the original cremophor formulation of

propofol had been used. As cremophor-containing anesthetics are associated with a significant frequency of anaphylactoid reactions, propofol has been reformulated as an aqueous emulsion (1% propofol, 10% soya bean oil, 2.25 glycerol, and 1.2% egg phosphatide).<sup>3</sup> Using the new formulation for induction of anesthesia, significant decreases in arterial pressure in combination with a slight fall in cardiac output have been observed in healthy patients breathing air<sup>4</sup> or 100% oxygen.<sup>5</sup>

Propofol, by virtue of its short duration of action and rapid elimination phase,<sup>6</sup> would appear to have an ideal pharmacologic profile for use in short surgical procedures. However, the anesthetic depth achieved with hypnotic agents may often be insufficient for surgery, and additional agents with analgesic properties, such as nitrous oxide or narcotics, are required. Therefore, the hemodynamic effects of anesthesia induction with propofol (the new formulation), alone and in combination with fentanyl, were studied in patients breathing 30% oxygen in nitrous oxide. A second purpose of this study was to evaluate the hemodynamic responses arising

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