ACCELERATED ONSET WITH PANCURONIUM, ATRACURIUM, AND VECURONIUM: COMPARISON WITH SUXAMETHONIUM

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The time of onset and degree of neuromuscular blockade in 80 anaesthetized patients following either a single bolus injection or divided doses of pancuronium, atracurium or vecuronium were determined and compared with those following suxamethonium. The time to maximum blockade (100%) following suxamethonium was 58.1 ± 5.3 s, whereas following a single bolus injection of pancuronium, atracurium or vecuronium it was 130.6 ± 22.2, 93.5 ± 6.35, 127.5 ± 13.0 s, respectively. The time to attain maximum blockade following divided doses of pancuronium, atracurium or vecuronium separated by 3 min decreased significantly to 77.9 ± 4.3, 77.5 ± 7.1, 89.0 ± 8.6 s, respectively. When the two doses were separated by 5 min, the time to onset of maximum neuromuscular blockade was slightly shorter than with a 3-min interval, but the difference was not statistically significant. With divided dosing, the onset of maximum neuromuscular blockade for atracurium, vecuronium and pancuronium was not as short as that achieved with suxamethonium.