NarcoTrend-assisted propofol/remifentanil anaesthesia for prevention of awareness

Editor—I read with interest about the comparison of the use of NarcoTrend and clinical assessment in judging the depth of anaesthesia while using total i.v. anaesthesia (TIVA).1 I fully agree with the authors that the use of clinical assessment alone would lead to a greater deviation from a defined target while running TIVA. The NarcoTrend, a computer-based EEG programme, is easy to use and has low running costs, besides in terms of prediction probability, the performance of the NarcoTrend index and the bispectral index to predict propofol effect-site concentrations was comparable. I recently conducted a small study to evaluate the number of cases who developed awareness under anaesthesia, out of the 25 anaesthetists who replied, five had cases of awareness under anaesthesia, and out of these five, four were under TIVA. The most significant of these cases was a 52-yr-old lady having an abdominal hysterectomy, anaesthetized by myself using target-controlled infusion (TCI) with propofol and remifentanil. Despite using a 1 μg kg⁻¹ bolus of remifentanil followed by an infusion of 0.2 μg kg⁻¹ h⁻¹ and running propofol at a target-controlled level of 6 μg ml⁻¹, clinically evaluating that the patient is asleep such as loss of eyelash reflex, at induction, fall in arterial pressure and heart rate, during maintenance of anaesthesia, the patient complained about awareness under anaesthesia for a short while after induction. Since awareness under anaesthesia is indeed a serious issue, I would indeed welcome the use of NarcoTrend if indeed it could decrease the incidence of awareness, and decrease incidence of nausea and vomiting as stated by the authors.

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Cardiac arrest during induction of anaesthesia in a child on long-term amphetamine therapy

Editor—The number of children on chronic amphetamine treatment for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) has dramatically increased during the last decade. Although several previous case reports1 have described serious adverse reactions during general anaesthesia in adult patients on chronic amphetamine, very little is known about perioperative problems with paediatric patients. We report a case in which a 10-yr-old child on long-term methylphenidate (MPH) therapy presented a cardiac arrest during induction of general anaesthesia.

A 10-yr-old male child was undergoing an ambulatory laser therapy of a haemangioma on the face. The patient...