

Post traumatic stress disorder and its relation to awareness during general anesthesia in cardiac surgery patients monitored by the bispectral index

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The experience of awareness under general anesthesia in patients undergoing cardiac surgery can undoubtedly be considered as distressing event outside the normal range of human experience. Such distressing event may cause psychiatric symptoms especially posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) with its distressing three symptom complexes; reexperiencing, avoidance, and physiological hyperarousal. The use of Bispectral index monitoring to abolish patients awareness under anesthesia have proved efficacy as an objective method for awareness monitoring nowadays. To detect PTSD in patients who may have experienced awareness under anesthesia while undergoing cardiac surgery and to correlate awareness with risk factors of cardiac illness. one hundred and twenty seven patients(95 patients after coronary artery bypass grafting, and 32 after valve replacement) were followed up 3 months postoperatively for the possible occurrence of PTSD using DSM IV and CAPS ,while awareness under anesthesia was monitored by Bispectral index. The results showed that 1.6% of patients had PTSD, and all of them experienced awareness under general anesthesia. Those patients who didn't have PTSD were unaware under anesthesia with high statistical significant difference between both groups. Thorough peri-operative management of anesthesia is necessary; the use of the Bispectral Index Scale (BIS) in cardiac surgery patients to prevent awareness, together with professional psychiatric assessment, treatment and long-term follow-up should constitute standard practice for all patients who experienced intra-operative awareness.