

Pain Management and the Neurosurgical Patient Susana L. Skukalek DNP, NP-C Emory University Department of Neurosurgery Atlanta, Georgia



Learning Objectives

- Identify issues surrounding pain, who is affected and understand pain as a major public health issue
- Identify issues surrounding opioid use and misuse
- Describe craniotomy specific pain management issues
 Understand the multimodal
- analgesic approach to craniotomy perioperative management

Introduction

Pain control in the post-operative period is an important component of wound healing and recovery after craniotomy. Complex issues surrounding opioid use and misuse influence provider prescribing practices. A multidisciplinary and multimodal approach to pain management can be effective in the care of the postoperative neurosurgical patient.

Methods

A review of the literature was conducted exploring populations at higher risk of poor pain management and the economic and emotional impact of pain on individuals and the healthcare system as a whole. This review includes an analysis of the common neurosurgical procedures most likely to cause pain and explores various options for use of a multimodal, multidisciplinary approach to pain control including non-opioid pain management strategies and the use of regional anesthesia in neurosurgical patients. There are millions of pain sufferers in the U.S. Early identification of at-risk populations may assist providers in anticipating and providing more effective pain control. Concerns over opioid misuse and a belief that neurosurgical procedures, including craniotomy, cause minimal pain have led to more conservative prescribing practices, but studies suggest that improved multimodal approaches to post-operative pain control can potentially lead to improved patient outcomes and decreased hospital lengths of stay and health-related expenses.

Conclusions

Results

Pain management can pose challenges in the care of the neurosurgical post operative patient. Perioperative craniotomy pain management involves a multidisciplinary approach with an emphasis on a multimodal analgesic approach.

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