

C-58 Regional Anesthesia and Acute Pain Management for Rib Fractures in a Patient on Anticoagulation

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Objective

After completion of this session, the participant will be able to:

- Characterize the benefits of utilizing regional anesthesia and multimodal pain management in patients with rib fractures.

Case Stem Question

55M with a history of atrial fibrillation (on warfarin), prior heroin use (currently on suboxone) who presents to the ER after a motor vehicle accident. The patient is complaining of 10/10 pain throughout, but particularly in the chest. He also notes significant difficulty breathing secondary to pain. Exam reveals increased work of breathing with decreased breath sounds. He notes exquisite tenderness to touch, throughout the chest. Vital signs show BP 100/60, HR 112, RR 24 SpO2 90%. Chest X-ray reveals rib fractures in the right anterior second to fourth rib and left posterior fifth to eighth rib. There is no pneumothorax. Labs are unremarkable with the exception of an INR of 2.4. His last dose of warfarin was that morning. You are called by the ER to assist in pain management.

Guiding Questions for Discussion

1. What are your immediate concerns with regard to this patient?
2. What are the main concerns regarding the management of patients with rib fractures?
3. What are your concerns with regard to pain management in this patient?
4. What regional nerve blocks might you consider in this patient?
5. What would be your preferred regional nerve block(s) for this patient?
6. Regarding regional anesthesia options, would you place peripheral nerve block catheters ? Why or why not ?
7. If you placed peripheral nerve block catheters, what dose of local anesthetic would you use?
8. What are some of the pertinent ASRA guidelines for neuraxial anesthesia and anticoagulation?
9. What are some of the pertinent ASRA guidelines for peripheral nerve blocks and anticoagulation?

10. If the patient's INR was normal and he was on no other anticoagulation, would you prefer to place an epidural in this patient?

11. What other nonnarcotic pain medications would you consider for this patient?