

Routine Preoperative Laboratory Tests for Pediatric Ambulatory Surgery : Should it be Curtailed?

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The routine preoperative evaluation of pediatric patients often includes a history, physical examination, complete blood count, Anti-HIV, CXR and urinary analysis (UA). It is routinely used in pediatric ambulatory surgery even though this is low-risk surgery, less blood loss and most of patients are healthy. So we studied to determine the role of abnormal preoperative laboratory test in perioperative management.

We retrospectively reviewed the medical record of 461 children. All children were physical status 1 and 2 who underwent minor surgery procedure between April 1998 to March 2000. The following data were collected : demographic data, number and result of investigation (e.g. anemia, Anti-HIV), major and minor complication and surgeons' perspective of laboratory test.

Eighty-eight percent of all patients had laboratory test and the most common laboratory test were CBC and Anti-HIV (87.2 and 74.8% respectively). Nineteen percent of patients were anemia, Anti-HIV was negative in all patients. Abnormal laboratory tests were not related to surgery canceled and perioperative complication. Some laboratory test did not examine in all patients because of surgeons' different preference.

We believe that a thorough clinical assessment of the patient is more important than routine preoperative laboratory screening which should be required only when justified by real clinical indications and this practice eliminates unnecessary costs without compromising the safety and the quality of care.

Key word : Pediatric, ambulatory surgery, preoperative laboratory test.