

## Factors Influencing Patients' Decision on Regional Anesthesia for Cesarean Section

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Recently there has been a breaking news throughout the country about cardiac arrests in regional anesthesia, especially for cesarean section. Whether the culprit is a local anesthetic agent or substandard care, we interviewed 87 parturients elected to undergo cesarean section at Ramathibodi Hospital during a 3-month period on factors involving their choices of anesthesia including impact of the news. The protocol was approved by Hospital Ethics Committee and patient informed consents were obtained. Sixty-seven parturients chose regional? while 20 chose general anesthesia (G). The patient characteristics were not statistically different between both (R VS G) groups : age (33.47 + 4.25 VS 33.25 + 5.23 years), body weight (68.78 + 8.55 VS 69.13 + 17.29 kg), gestational age (37.95 + 0.90 VS 37.75 + 0.63 wk), numbers of gravida, para and abortion, history of antenatal care, Buddhist religion, co-existing diseases, occupations, health insurances , and diagnoses. Over half were previous cesarean section and elderly primigravida. Only education in more college (86.5%) and past anesthetic history as regional anesthetic experiences (40%) in R group that differed from G group (60% and 10% with  $p < 0.02$  and  $0.004$  respectively). Preoperative questions were asked concerning knowledge of anesthetic procedures and pain relief by regional anesthesia, talk on techniques through friends and family, anxiety about the operation, will to see a newborn delivery and breastmilk, anticipation of baby gender and reasons in coming for service. Postoperatively, they were interviewed on future pregnancy and choice of anesthesia, satisfaction for anesthetic and surgical services and impression on newborn delivery. The key question was changing technique if they heard the news. Results showed that the parturients who knew pain relief capability of regional anesthesia (82%) would choose this technique ( $p = 0.009$ ) and almost all in both groups would like to have a look of newborn delivery. Hospital good services and recommendations were their main reasons for coming. Degrees of satisfaction ranged from much to very much. While they chose same anesthetic techniques for next delivery (97%), 30% in R group would change to general anesthesia on impact of the news. The influential parameters were represented by : choice of anesthesia =  $0.02$  (education) +  $0.02$  (prior anesthetic experience) +  $0.14$  (pain relief knowledge) +  $0.1$  (baby sight) +  $0.49$  (next choice) +  $0.13$  (news),  $r^2 = 0.48$ . This study was concluded that patient education, prior experience in regional anesthesia, knowledge of postoperative pain relief and sight of the newborn played a significant role in decision making on the choice of anesthesia in cesarean section. However, the patients could be moved by negative health care information.

Key words : elective cesarean section, regional anesthesia, choice of anesthesia, satisfaction