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Intratympanic injections Review & updates

Essay Submitted for partial fulfillment of master degree in Otolaryngology-Head & neck surgery

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Cairo University 2011



Acknowledgement

First and foremost I feel always indebted to **ALLAH**, the Most Beneficent and Merciful

I would first like to express my unlimited gratitude and thankfulness to my **Prof. Dr. Mohamed Nabil Lasheen**, Professor of Otolaryngology, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University, for his acceptance to supervise my work and for his continuous support, his valuable advises and encouragement without his encourage and help I would not have been able to finish this work.

Many thanks to **Prof. Dr. Mohamed Anwar Abdel-Hamid**, Professor of Otolaryngology, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University, who showed me the way and the first steps for going on into this work, who helped me much and his continuous guidance.

My deepest gratitude and appreciation are to **Dr. Badawy**Mohamed Chafik Khalifa, Lecturer of Otolaryngology, Faculty of

Medicine, Cairo University, for his generous help and valuable

comments during the preparation of this work.

Also, I can not forget the motivation and help introduced by my friends and my family, who supported me in the production of this work...

Abstract

Each technique has its associated advantages and disadvantages, and the surgeon must decide which technique to use in concordance with the patient's disease and expectations. In the future, new medications likely will be developed to treat certain types of inner ear disease, including SSNHL, tinnitus, and various forms of vertigo. These medications can be administered by direct chemical perfusion of the inner ear.

Key word: Intratympanic, injections, Otolaryngology

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Abbreviations

ITIntratympanic
RWRound window
RWM:Round window membrane
ABR:Auditory Brainstem Response
STScala tympani
svScala vestibuli
CSFCerebrospinal fluid
ESSEndolymphatic sac surgery
MDMeniere's disease
AIEDAutoimmune inner ear disease
SSNHLSudden sensorineural hearing loss

Introduction:

Intratympanic (IT) injection is a promising, relatively new therapy for a variety of inner ear conditions that offers many potential benefits over the systemic administration of medications. IT injection allows the local application of medications directly to the inner ear by absorption across an intact round window (RW) membrane. Use of IT injections avoids the necessity for systemic administration, which is important with medications having serious side effects, such as corticosteroids. It may also yield a higher concentration of medication in the inner ear (Barrs, 2004).

The delivery of medication to the inner ear through the transtympanic route dates back to 1935, when Barany reported his treatment of tinnitus with middle-ear delivery of lidocaine. In the 1950s Schuknecht reported his use of streptomycin in Meniere's disease (MD), and Sakata et al. (1982) published their results with steroids treatment of cochlear tinnitus by blocking with 4% lidocaine and Decadron infusion (Seidman and Vivek, 2004).

Recent research has discovered the anatomy and physiology of the RW and provided important information on the inner ear pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of drugs administered intratympanically. Although aminoglycosides and steroids have been most thoroughly studied, many other classes of pharmaceuticals, including other antibiotics, and topical anesthetics, have therapeutic potential in the inner ear and will probably be the subject of future studies (Banerjee and Parnes, 2004).

The different methods of chemical perfusion of the inner ear in the form of transtympanic injection with a tuberculin syringe, the use of a pressure equalizing tube, the RW micro catheter (Weisskopf et al., 2001), and the Silverstein Microwick allow the local application of medications directly to the inner ear by absorption across an intact RW membrane (Silverstein et al., 2001).

IT steroids are increasingly used in the treatment of inner ear disorders, especially in patients with sudden sensorineural hearing loss (SSNHL) who have failed systemic therapy with minimal morbidity (Haynes et al., 2007).

In SSNHL methylprednisolone injection provides more significant hearing improvement for patients that failed with previous high dose systemic corticosteroid administration than systemic corticosteroid treatment alone. So it may be the first-step medical treatment of idiopathic SSNHL alone or at least may be combined with the systemic corticosteroid administration (Plaza & Herraiz, 2007).

IT treatment of tinnitus with corticosteroids or gentamycin should be considered as an option of treatment in selected tinnitus patient alone or in combination with standard modalities of management such as tinnitus retraining therapy, masking, and hearing aid amplification. Some Meniere's disease patients with tinnitus may experience tinnitus improvement following IT steroids. This treatment may be considered in such patients with good hearing, while gentamycin is effective in eliminating or reducing