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Meta-Analysis

Preoperative Education for Pain Relief after the Lower Limb Joint Replacement Surgery: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

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Abstract

Background: Knee and hip replacement surgeries are associated with chronic postoperative pain, and since their management is a clinical challenge to nurses.

Objectives: the present meta-analysis aimed at investigating preoperative education for pain relief after the lower limb joint replacement surgery. **Methods:** Quasi-experimental studies and clinical trials of preoperative education for the management of pain after hip and knee replacement surgeries publishes in English were searched in the databases of Web of Science, Cochrane Library, CINAHL, PubMed, Embase, and Scopus. **Results:** Out of 209 articles retrieved, five were eligible to enter the meta-analysis. Based on the obtained results, the difference in the mean scores of pain in days 1, 2, and 3 after surgery in the intervention groups was lower than that of the control groups; however, the relationship was

statistically insignificant.

Conclusion: Evidence from study results suggests that pre-THA and TKA training may not significantly reduce pain; However further investigation is needed.

Keywords: Knee replacement, hip replacement, preoperative training, pain.

Introduction

Postoperative pain is a clinical challenge to nurses for taking care of patients.^{1,2} It is common occurred as an acute condition due to tissue damage, inflammation, and healing process.^{3,4} Most patients compliant with postoperative pain, but the level of pain varies across surgeries and depends on patient's experiences, age, gender, and expectations.⁵ A combination of these factors makes it difficult to predict the level of pain experienced and its tolerance.^{4,6}

Inadequate assessment and management of postoperative pain may cause insomnia anxiety, increased need for analgesics, experience of pain, increased stress, and limited mobility.^{7,8} Various factors play a role in failure to control pain, including poor caregiver-patient relationship, unrealistic expectations, and improper education of patients.^{6,9,10} Poor control and inadequate treatment of pain may lead to negative consequences, such as progression of chronic pain, deep vein thrombosis, atelectasis, increased

postoperative complications, prolonged hospitalization, exacerbation of the disease, prolonged use of medicines, particularly narcotics, physical dysfunction and lower quality of life, impaired recovery, increased care costs, and delayed return to normal daily activities and work.^{11,12}

Unfortunately, narcotics administered to control postoperative pain have many side effects; for instance, morphine has a negative effect on the internal regulation of endorphins secretion and contributes to the natural body's response to pain.⁶ In addition, relieving postoperative pain without narcotics use reduces nausea, vomiting, and risk of wound dehiscence, and facilitates mobility.7 In addition, it seems that early postoperative pain may lead to persistent pain lasting months in a significant number of patients. Preventive measures should be performed to control the progression of acute and chronic postoperative pain, and reduce the incidence and intensity of pain during and immediately after surgery.^{8,9} Despite a better understanding of pain mechanisms, reports of the prevalence of postoperative pain, advances in pain management techniques, and other initiatives aiming to improve pain control outcomes in the last decade, the management of postoperative pain remains a major health concern.

Pain management is one of the major clinical challenges of postoperative nursing care. However, previous studies have not shown adequate progression and management of postoperative pain 10,11 Raising patients' awareness of pain and analgesic options may increase the likelihood of achieving the optimal control of postoperative pain. By shortening the duration of hospitalization and increasing the number of surgeries per day, patients should be comfortable enough to participate in the recovery process and continue self-care practices immediately in the postoperative period.

Preoperative education is a tool to prepare patients for planning the management of pain and the postoperative recovery period. The education can include information about the importance of pain management and treatment goals. The level of pain might be experienced by the patient, and the importance of reporting pain. Pain management options, including both pharmacological and nonpharmacological strategies, should be explained and available. 12-14 Despite years of evidence-based education and guidance, researches showed that the management of postoperative pain remains a major problem. Evidence of the effect of preoperative education on postoperative pain varies contradictory. A review study conducted by McDonald et al., examining training in hip joint replacement reported contradictory results (Patient training). Various review studies have focused on specific surgeries, with a range of consequences. Until now, to the best of authors' knowledge, no comprehensive study investigated postoperative pain in various surgical and educational interventions.¹⁵ Therefore, it is essential to combine the evidence and systematic evaluation of the effect of preoperative educational interventions on postoperative pain in patients undergoing elective surgery and examine the contents and different types of preoperative educational interventions.

Objectives

Hence, the present study aimed at determining the effect of preoperative education on pain relief in the lower limb (knee/hip) joint replacement surgery.

Materials and Methods Search strategy

The present systematic review study relied on the Cochrane Manual for Systematic Reviews for Interventional Studies,¹⁶ using the PRISMA statement (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses). The search strategy was retrieved and prepared for related studies, using PICO search terms (i e, patient or population, intervention, control, or comparison and results). The Cochrane Library, CINAHL, PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Embase electronic databases were searched for the clinical trials research on of the effect of preoperative education on pain relief after elective knee/hip replacement surgery, published by the end of 2019 in the English and Persian languages.

The combination of used search terms was: (Perioperative Period) (Mesh) and (Patient Education as Topic) (Mesh) and (Postoperative Period) (Mesh) and (Postoperative Pain) (Mesh), using logical functions (AND, OR, NOT). In addition, other references from original and related review articles were searched in the mentioned databases, and then reviewed. After screening of the titles and abstracts, duplicate articles were excluded. The full-texts of all remaining articles were reviewed for eligibility. Finally, the eligible articles on preoperative education of patients with hip/knee replacement surgery were included.

Inclusion criteria

Study types: Original research articles published by the end of 2019 in the English language. Articles on adult populations (aged 18 years and above) undergoing elective surgery, and randomized controlled, quasi-experimental, clinical trials of preoperative education in patients undergoing elective surgery. Intervention types: Articles on the effectiveness of preoperative education in the outcomes of postoperative pain.

Sample types: Articles on adults undergoing lower limb joint (hip/knee) replacement surgery. Preliminary results: Articles reporting the initial measurements of pain level.

Secondary outcomes: including anxiety, quality of life, surgical wound complications, and patient satisfaction. Gray literature on unpublished results in dissertations and articles published in journals with a low impact factor were not reviewed due to difficulty in accessing and lack of credibility.

Extraction and combination of data

The Cochrane data extraction form for systematic review was utilized in the current study. The two authors extracted

data from the selected articles separately and reached an agreement after exchanging the views. In this regard, if there was a disagreement between the two researchers, the third researcher would be asked to judge between them. The data extraction form the included items on the name of the first author, year of publication, authors' nationality, study design, intervention details (e.g. educational content, number and duration of sessions), research tools, evaluation, and results.

Qualitative evaluation

Qualitative evaluation of the clinical trials was performed by the Center for Review & Dissemination (CDR 2009). All the included articles were evaluated in terms of the following criteria: randomization, blinding, follow-up, analysis of excluded subjects, blinding of data analyzers, and delivering the same treatment, except intervention. CDR 2009 has seven items scored based on a 0-1 scale. If a study meets a criterion, it gets 1 point, otherwise gets 0. The total score of the scale ranges from 0 to 7; scores of ≥5 indicate a high quality of the evaluated article.

Statistical analysis

In the present study, the I² index and Cochran test were utilized to evaluate the heterogeneity of the studies (P-value <0.1). Given the significance of the Cochrane test results and heterogeneity of the studies the random-effects model was used to estimate the pooled mean difference. The Metacommand was used to estimate the difference between the mean pain scores of the intervention and control groups, as well as the difference between the mean pain scores of 1 and 3 post-surgical days in the intervention and control groups. The Egger and Begg tests were used to evaluate the publication bias. A Forest plot was used to display the results of each study, as well as overall estimates and confidence interval of 95%. Data analysis was performed using Stata 16 (Stata Corp, College Station, TX, USA).

Results

Selection of articles: All articles published in the English language were systematically reviewed based on four steps of PRISMA. A total of 209 studies were retrieved in the initial search. It should be noted that no article was found in the article review; also, no article was found in Persian. Then, 93 duplicates were excluded. After the evaluation of the titles and abstracts, 40 articles were excluded. Besides, 35 ineligible articles were excluded after the review of their full-text, including qualitative studies, non-experimental and quasiexperimental studies without a control group, those without preoperative education, and papers reporting irrelevant outcomes. Finally, five articles entered the systematic review (Figure-1). A brief and complete description of the reviewed articles is presented in (Table-1).

Qualitative evaluation of the articles showed that three (60%) had a high quality (3-5) and the rest had a low quality (1-2) (Table-2). Of the five studies retrieved, two articles (40%) were quasi-experimental (1-2), and the rest randomized clinical trials (3-5). Patients were within the age range of 64-73 years.

Outcomes of the studies: The present study focused on the effect of preoperative education on postoperative pain in patients, and other findings were not discussed specifically and comparatively due to lack of homogeneity- e. g., anxiety, quality of life, surgical wound complications, and patient satisfaction (Table-1).

Methods of education: The content provided for the intervention group was presented in written, verbal, audio, and video forms in DVDs and CDs. The writing methods included manuals and educational pamphlets. In-person classes and face-to-face training were also used for training; the time of each session varied from 15 to 30 minutes. The results of the training were followed up 1-3 days after surgery. Nevertheless, some studies held a single session before surgery using a variety of educational content and even a combination of educational methods (Table-1).

Instruments utilized: Two standard scales were utilized to measure the level of pain, amongst them, the visual analogue scale (VAS) was the most commonly used one (1-4), while the numeric rate scale (NRS) was used only in one study (5).

Based on the results of the meta-analysis, the difference among the mean pain scores of days 1, 2, and 3 after surgery in the intervention group was lower than that of the control group; however, the relationship was not significant (Figure-2). According to Figure-3, a comparison of pain scores of days 1 and 3 after surgery showed that preoperative education could affect postoperative pain levels, so that the difference in the mean pain score on day 1 was 1 point higher than that of day 3. Also, the difference in the mean pain score of day 1 after surgery was lower than that of day 3. Due to the small number of meta-analyses, the comparison of the pain scores on days 1 and 2 after surgery was not possible.

According to the Begg and Egger tests, there was no evidence of publication bias for the pain score of postoperative on days 1 (P=0.37), 2 (P=0.45), and 3 (P=0.38).

Discussion

Given that the importance of preoperative education is increasing, the results of the present systematic review showed that there was no evidence of the efficacy of preoperative education in postoperative pain relief. However, since the quality of the evidence varied, these results should be interpreted with caution. In addition, different outcomes should be further discussed in different aspects.

The differences in the results may be attributed to the effects of type of applied educational approach and power of education on postoperative outcomes by different studies. Some studies have even emphasized on self-care education.¹⁷ Many self-care education strategies in patient education programs are developed to fulfill their role in the management of disease and its symptoms. Self-efficacy is the belief in the application of personal abilities to organize and implement the necessary actions in the situations ahead. Selfefficacy is a factor that modulates postoperative pain, as well as its recovery and anxiety.18,19

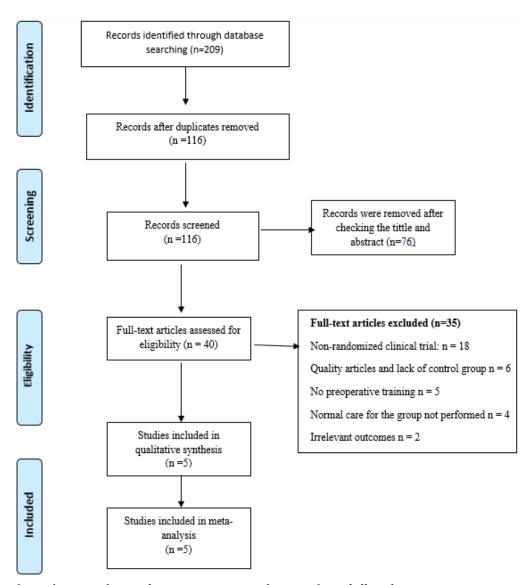


Figure-1. Article search strategy diagram for systematic review and meta-analysis of effect of preoperative training on pain after lower extremity joint replacement surgery (pelvis and knee)

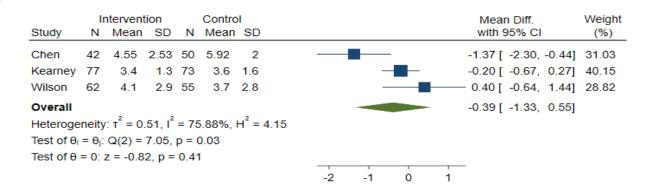
Table-1. Details of selected studies for regular and meta-analysis of the effect of preoperative training on pain after lower extremity joint replacement surgery (hip and knee)

Authors and	Type of	Pain	Consequences	Type of control	Type of		Results
years	surgery	assessment		group training	intervention		
		tool			group training		
					Preoperative	details	
					sessions		
Su-Ru Chen	pain and	Reduce	Routine care	total Knee	A 15-minute	Educational	verbal
2014 13	rehabilitation	pain			session the day	CD and	numerical
					before surgery	pamphlet	rating scale
					A 15-minute		
					session the day		
					after surgery		
Marge	Complication	No	Routine care	Total hip/ total	structured	Face to face	vas
Kearney	s after surgery	significant		Knee	preoperative		
201114		effects on			education class		
		pain					
Alison H.	pain,	No	Standard care	total hip	A rehabilitation	Rehabilitation	vas
2004 15	function,	significant			class	class	
	satisfaction,	effects on			A booklet	booklet	
	and quality of	pain					
	life						
Rosemary A.	Pain and	No	Routine care	total hip	One session	Rehabilitation	vas
Wilson	anxiety	significant				class	
2016 16		effects on				booklet	
		pain					
Marie Cooke	pain	No	Standard care	Total hip/ total	One session	Training by	NRS
2016 17	Anxiety	significant		Knee		dvd	
	Postoperative	effects on					
	satisfaction	pain					
	with pain						
	control						

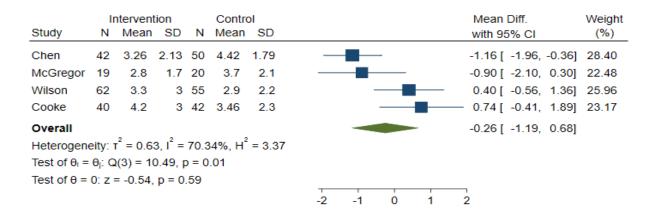
Table-2. Quality of selected articles for meta-analysis of the effect of preoperative training on pain after lower extremity joint replacement surgery (hip and knee)

Study	Randomization	Blindness	Follow up	Analysis of exits	Blinding the results evaluators	Baseline comparison	Same treatment except intervention	Total score
Su-Ru Chen 2014 ¹³	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3
Marge Kearney 2011 ¹⁴	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	3
Alison H. 2004 ¹⁵	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	5
Rosemary A. Wilson 2016 16	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	6
Marie Cooke ¹⁷ 2016	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	5





В



C

	Intervention Control					ol	Mean Diff. W	/eight
Study	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	with 95% CI	(%)
Chen	42	2.95	1.92	50	3	1.75	-0.05 [-0.80, 0.70] 2	1.12
Kearney	77	3	1.6	73	2.9	1.4	0.10 [-0.38, 0.58] 5	1.16
Wilson	62	2.8	2.5	55	2.8	2.7	0.00 [-0.94, 0.94] 1	3.39
Cooke	40	2.05	2	42	2.48	2.2	-0.43 [-1.34, 0.48] 1	4.32
Overall							-0.02 [-0.37, 0.32]	
Heterogeneity: $\tau^2 = 0.00$, $I^2 = 0.00\%$, $H^2 = 1.00$								
Test of $\theta_1 = \theta_1$: Q(3) = 1.02, p = 0.80								
Test of $\theta = 0$: $z = -0.12$, $p = 0.91$								
							-2 -1 0 1	

Figure-2. Forest plots displaying the comparisons of pooled mean difference of pain score between intervention and control groups in postoperative day 1 (A), postoperative day 2 (B) and postoperative day 3 (C)

A

Intervention			Contro	ol	Mean Diff.	Weight		
Study	N	Mean	SD	N	Mean	SD	with 95% CI	(%)
Chen	42	4.55	2.53	42	2.95	2.95	1.60 [0.42, 2.78]	26.12
Kearney	77	3.4	1.3	77	3	3	0.40 [-0.33, 1.13]	42.42
Wilson	62	4.1	2.9	62	2.8	2.8	1.30 [0.30, 2.30]	31.46
Overall							1.00 [0.24, 1.76]	
Heteroge	neity:	$T^2 = 0.2$	2, I ² =	47.5	3%, H²	= 1.91		
Test of θ ₁	= 0 ₁ : (Q(2) = 3	.77, p	= 0.1	15			
Test of θ	= 0: z	= 2.57,	p = 0.0	01				
							0 1 2 3	

В

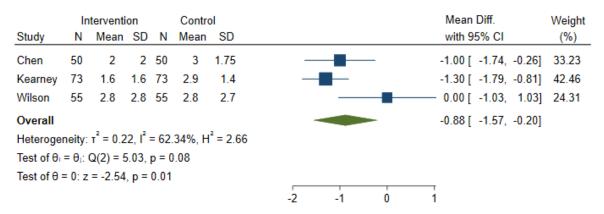


Figure-3. Forest plots displaying the comparisons of pooled mean difference of pain score between postoperative day 1, postoperative day 3 in intervention groups (A) and in control groups (B)

Although the results of the study by Cooke et al., did not show a significant difference between the pain scores of two groups before and after surgery, and they recommended the improvement of self-efficacy intervention, in addition to providing educational DVDs. Providing effective training, holding group discussions focusing on self-efficacy improvement, reducing anxiety, and follow-up can be effective in reducing pain and returning to daily activities.¹⁷

The type of educational content and its systematic presentation to reduce postoperative pain were considered by some studies. Some studies aimed at preventing and reducing the mechanism of pain in the provision of educational content, so that in a study by Aberomand et al., on the reduction of headache in patients undergoing spinal anesthesia, the face-to-face presentation of educational content and materials led to significant results.²⁰ A similar approach was also employed in the study by Sugai et al., on the physiological mechanism of pain.²¹

In Chen et al., ¹³ on the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral interventions in improving postoperative pain management in patients undergoing hip replacement surgery, no significant results were obtained regarding the improvement of physical function by training rehabilitation exercises. They believed that a proper understanding of pain control enables patients to effectively manage their pain, not just tolerate it. The evaluation of the results showed positive outcomes until day 3, but no significant results were obtained on days 4 and 5. Generally, it seems that the results of studies performed in surgeries requiring long-term follow-ups and care for the management of postoperative were often disappointing. These surgeries are mostly performed on the spine or include complete hip/knee replacement. The results of a review study

by McDonald et al., on the complete hip replacement surgery are consistent with the finding of the present study. They reported that preoperative education might exacerbate the results, compared to the conventional postoperative care.²²

The manner of dealing with the patient is another factor that affects the results of educational interventions. Pereira et al., ²³ used a patient-centered empathetic approach in preoperative interviews that led to the reduction in anxiety and postoperative general pain. Their findings support a model that relied on empathetic communication with the patient. The application of this model led to the mental health and satisfaction of patients with the provided information and accelerated physical recovery. Previous studies indicated that anxiety is associated with the painful recovery and the need for sedatives and analgesics. ²⁴

It is noteworthy that if the study is performed in an environment with relatively high educational standards, as regular daily care is provided for the patients, finding significant differences between the intervention and usual care results would be difficult.

Evidence showed that preoperative education, as a complex intervention, could not reduce postoperative pain. The reason for this complexity can be related to the philosophy and nature of education. According to the evidence, a variety of factors can affect the effect of preoperative education on the postoperative pain. Among them, selecting educational content consistent with the patient's needs, type of surgery, and duration of follow-up and continuity of care, method of providing education, quality of the intervention, patient's knowledge regarding pain measurement method, and interactive education with empathy are the most important factors. Many factors are involved in the structure of the

teaching and learning process and its effectiveness. The use of scientific, educational approaches according to the patient's needs can be effective in the transfer of knowledge and concepts and achievement of the ultimate goal of the improvement of cognition, learning, and behavior change. Utilization of structured and comprehensive educational programs with appropriate content can increase patients' awareness and enable them to effectively get involved in selfcare, increase self-efficacy, and reduce postoperative complications.²⁵⁻²⁷

The role of the trainer, who may be a qualified and trained nurse, is more evident. The importance of the trainer ability for communication, interaction and empathy with patients in the education process and providing feedback to patients in meaningful learning, control of pain and anxiety is pivotal.

In addition to valuable quantitative research in this field, it is recommended to conduct further qualitative studies.

The limitation of the study was the lack of access to unpublished articles (gray literature). Moreover, since different methods have been used for preoperative surgery in the reviewed articles, the results of this study cannot be trusted with a high certainty.

Conclusions

The present study suggests that pre-THA and TKA training may not significantly reduce pain. However further studies are required to confirm our findings.

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None.

Authors' Contribution

All authors pass the four criteria for authorship contribution based on the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) recommendations.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declared no potential conflict of interests with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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