

Distinguishing Anesthetic Fiction from Fact: A Discussion (Part 2)

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- I. Anticholinergics should be included in all anesthetic protocols
 - a. Fiction
 - b. Several premedications can cause bradycardia and salivation
 - c. Anticholinergics treat bradycardia
 - d. Anticholinergics limit oral secretions
 - e. Cardiac output may still be preserved even in the face of bradycardia
 - f. May increase the work if the heart if preload is already increased (as in the case of alpha-2 agonists)
- II. Animals should be able to go home “normal” after general anesthesia
 - a. Fiction
 - b. Patients should be able to maintain normal functions (i.e. using litter box or going outside, finding water and food bowls)
 - c. General anesthesia and heavy sedation is exhausting
 - i. Like a physiologic half-marathon
 - d. Good client communication is the key
 - e. Clients need to have realistic expectations
- III. Opioids can cause dangerous respiratory depression
 - a. Fact and Fiction
 - b. Primates can have fatal respiratory depression
 - c. Routine veterinary patients do not have clinically significant respiratory depression in the absence of concurrent respiratory disease
 - d. Can have cumulative depressive effects in conjunction with other drugs used in anesthesia (induction, inhalants)
 - i. Good monitoring will prevent any issues with concurrent use of opioids and other anesthetics
- IV. There are no good options for opioids in cats
 - a. Fiction
 - b. Cats can have extrapyramidal effects from opioids when they are not painful
 - c. When cats are painful, opioids cause noticeable relaxation
- V. Using as few drugs as possible is best
 - a. Fiction
 - b. Multimodal analgesia and balanced anesthesia limits the side effects of individual drugs
 - c. Inhibiting the pain pathway in as many points as possible will have the most profound effect on pain perception
- VI. Butorphanol is a good analgesic for most procedures
 - a. Fiction
 - b. Limited duration of action
 - c. Ceiling effect
 - d. Agonist-antagonist
 - e. Has its place for short, mild pain procedures