Therapeutic Environmental Effects on Analgesic Requirements during Post Anesthesia Care Phase I

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ABSTRACT

The noisy and brightly lit environment in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit (PACU) Phase I has the potential to agitate the arousing post anesthesia patient, delay recovering to an awake state, and could increase the need for analgesia medications. An experimental study was conducted in a community hospital PACU to determine the effects of a therapeutic environment (I.E. low lights and decreased noise) on analgesic requirements and satisfaction of patients recovering from surgery. Patients who had the quieter and darker environment did require less analgesic medications (reduced lighting p=0.005; t=-21.54; mean difference -298.0249; reduced noise exposure p=0.005; t=-3.855; mean difference = -3.72773). Participants in the control group expressed dissatisfaction with the bright lights while the treatment group had no complaints. Noise levels, which were much more difficult to control, elicited some dissatisfaction from both groups.