Pulmonary injury after cardiopulmonary bypass: Beneficial effects of low-frequency mechanical ventilation

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Objective: Pulmonary dysfunction is a frequent postoperative complication after cardiac surgery with cardiopulmonary bypass, and atelectasis is thought to be one of the main causes. The aim of this study was to evaluate whether low-frequency ventilation and continuous positive airway pressure during cardiopulmonary bypass reduce postcardiopulmonary bypass lung injury.

Methods: Eighteen Yorkshire pigs were subjected to 120 minutes of cardiopulmonary bypass (1 hour of cardioplectic arrest) followed by 90 minutes of recovery before being sacrificed. Six animals served as control with the endotracheal tube open to atmosphere during cardiopulmonary bypass. The remaining animals were divided into 2 groups of 6: One group received continuous positive airway pressure of 5 cm H2O, and one group received low-frequency ventilation (5/minute) during cardiopulmonary bypass. Lung tissue biopsy and bronchoalveolar lavage samples were obtained before and 90 minutes after discontinuation of cardiopulmonary bypass for measurement of adenine nucleotide (adenosine-5'-triphosphate, adenosine diphosphate, adenosine monophosphate), lactate dehydrogenase, DNA levels, and histology. Hemodynamic data and arterial blood gases were also collected through the study.

Results: The hemodynamic parameters were similar in the 3 groups. After cardiopulmonary bypass, the low-frequency ventilation group showed significantly better oxygen tension and alveolar arterial oxygen gradient, higher adenine nucleotide, lower lactate dehydrogenase levels, and reduced histologic damage in lung biopsy, as well as lower DNA levels in bronchoalveolar lavage compared with the control group. The continuous positive airway pressure group showed only significantly reduced lactate dehydrogenase levels compared with control.

Conclusion: Low-frequency ventilation during cardiopulmonary bypass in a pig experimental model reduces tissue metabolic and histologic damage in the lungs and is associated with improved postoperative gas exchange.
Abbreviations and Acronyms

- A-aDO2 = alveolar arterial oxygen gradient
- ADP = adenosine diphosphate
- AMP = adenosine monophosphate
- ATP = adenosine-\textsuperscript{5'}-triphosphate
- BAL = bronchoalveolar lavage
- CABG = coronary artery bypass grafting
- CPAP = continuous positive airway pressure
- CPB = cardiopulmonary bypass
- LFV = low-frequency ventilation
- PaCO\textsubscript{2} = arterial carbon dioxide tension
- PaO\textsubscript{2} = arterial oxygen tension
- PCO\textsubscript{2} = carbon dioxide tension
- PO\textsubscript{2} = oxygen tension

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Animals

Eighteen healthy Yorkshire pigs (body weight: 50–65 kg) were purchased from a commercial breeder. All animals were treated in accordance with the Home Office Guidance on the Operation of Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986 (HMSO, London).

Anesthesia and Surgery

All animals were anesthetized with intramuscular injection of ketamine (20 mg/kg), which was followed by intravenous injection of thiopentone (20 mg/kg). Anesthesia was achieved by using diazepam (1 mg/kg), fentanyl (15 \mu g/kg for initial dose and 50 \mu g/kg/h for maintenance), and propofol (1 mg/kg for initial dose and 6 mg/kg/h for maintenance).

Animals were placed in a supine position and an endotracheal tube was inserted for mechanical ventilation, which started with 10 mL/kg tidal volume, 15/min frequency, 100% of oxygen, and 0 mm Hg of end-expiratory pressure. To obtain favorable arterial carbon dioxide tension (PaCO\textsubscript{2}) (35.0–45.0 mm Hg) and pH (7.35–7.45), tidal volume was changed before surgery, whereas other settings were fixed. The right carotid artery and vein were exposed for monitoring arterial pressure and insertion of a Swan-Ganz catheter. The heart was then exposed via a median sternotomy, and CPB was established from a commercial breeder. All animals were treated in accordance with the Home Office Guidance on the Operation of Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act, 1986 (HMSO, London).

Collection of Samples and Analysis

Arterial blood gases and cardiac function were monitored throughout the protocol. Small-volume airway lavage (0.5 mL/kg) fluid samples were collected before CPB, immediately before stopping CPB, on restarting mechanical ventilation, and 90 minutes after CPB ended. Lung biopsies were also collected at the same time points from the left lower lobe for metabolic and histopathologic examinations. The airway lavage procedure and measurements of protein and DNA in airway lavage were performed as previously described. For measurements of adenine nucleotides (adenosine-\textsuperscript{5'}-triphosphate [ATP] + adenosine diphosphate [ADP] + adenosine monophosphate [AMP]) and lactate level, tissue samples were immediately put into liquid nitrogen and stored at –80°C. Frozen tissue samples were crushed to powder in liquid nitrogen, transferred to ice cool 4.8% perchorlic acid, and centrifuged at 4000 rpm for 10 minutes at 4°C. The supernatant was then neutralized using 0.44 mol/L K\textsubscript{2}CO\textsubscript{3} and centrifuged again at 4000 rpm for 10 minutes at 4°C, after which the supernatant was collected for high performance liquid chromatography analysis. The concentrations of various adenine nucleotides (ATP, ADP, AMP) were measured using a high performance liquid chromatography machine according to Smolensky and colleagues. Lactate in the extract was measured using a kit from Sigma (Gillingham, Dorset, UK).

Histopathologic examination was performed by an experienced pathologist blinded to the randomization using a well-established method. In brief, for light microscopic examinations, the area of atelectasis or pulmonary edema was painted with a different color and an image of the colored photographs was taken with an image scanner (Hewlett Packard, Scanjet IICX/T, Palo Alto, Calif) using the adobe Photoshop program (Adobe Systems Inc, San Jose, Calif). The colored area was selected with Photoshop and measured with the Image 1.62 program (National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md). Ten representative photographs for each sample were analyzed. Pathologic findings were then graded on a scale of (−) to (+++), which was determined on the basis of the percentage of the area of the specimen: (−), 0%; (±), 0% to 5%; (+), 5% to 10%; (++), 10% to 20%; (+++), 20% to 30%. The results of electron microscopy were presented in a scale of (−) to (+++); absent or normal; (±), present but not evident; (+), present; (++), abundantly present. Statistical analysis was then applied by converting the grading to ordinal numbers (grade [−] = 0, [±] = 1, [+] = 2, [++] = 3). The final grading results were determined from the median value of all observations in each respective group.

Statistical Analyses

All statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 16.0J for Windows (SPSS Inc, Chicago, Ill). Because most of the data were not normally distributed, nonparametric tests were used for all analyses. Difference between groups was evaluated with the Kruskal–Wallis test before Mann–Whitney U test, and if the P value was less than .05, Bonferroni’s correction was applied to the P value of the Mann–Whitney U test. To investigate the differences between pre-CPB and post-CPB values and measurements at different time points within each group, the Friedman test was performed initially, and if the P value was less than .05, the Wilcoxon test and Bonferroni’s correction were applied to identify the significant differences.

RESULTS

Hemodynamic Data

Changes of hemodynamic parameters were similar in the 3 groups, although significant deteriorations were common after CPB. Pulmonary arterial pressure and cardiac output were deteriorated after CPB (P < .05 in Friedman test in each group); however, there were no significant differences in any parameters at each time point among the 3 groups (Figure 1).
Changes in Arterial Blood Gas Analysis

Changes in PaO₂, P aCO₂, and alveolar arterial oxygen gradient (A-aDO₂) are shown in Figure 2. Only the LFV group showed no significant deterioration in PaO₂, P aCO₂, and A-aDO₂ during CPB, and this was maintained throughout the post-CPB period. The CPAP group did not show significant deterioration in PCO₂ immediately after CPB ($P = .08$), although the oxygen tension (PO₂) level was similar to control group. The LFV group showed significant improvements in PO₂ and A-aDO₂ over the control group immediately after CPB.

DNA in Bronchoalveolar Lavage

DNA level in BAL was increased during CPB in the control and CPAP groups ($P < .005$ and $< .01$, respectively, in Friedman test). Two hours after CPB, mean values were still 2- to 4-fold higher but not statistically significant (Figure 3). The LFV group did not show a significant increase ($P > .1$ in Friedman test) after CPB and showed significantly less DNA level than in the control group but not in the CPAP group at the end of CPB.

Tissue Adenine Nucleotides and Lactate

Total adenine nucleotides (ATP + ADP + AMP) and ATP/ADP ratio were decreased after CPB in the control group ($P = .01$ and .006, respectively, in Friedman test), whereas no significant changes in these parameters were seen in the LFV group. The CPAP group also showed a decrease in ATP/ADP ratio at the end of CPB ($P = .03$ in Friedman test, Figure 4). The LFV group showed higher adenine nucleotides level and ATP/ADP ratio after CPB over the control group. The CPAP group showed higher total adenine nucleotides level than control group, but this did not reach statistical significance.

Tissue lactate contents were increased during CPB in each group (control: $P = .009$, CPAP: $P = .006$ and LFV: $P = .018$ in Friedman test, Figure 4). The increase was significantly less in the LFV group than in the control group. The CPAP group showed lower lactate level than the control group, although there was no statistical significance ($P < .1$).

Histopathologic Examinations

Histopathologic changes examined through semiquantitative evaluation using light and electronic microscopic studies are presented in Table 1. Damage was summarized as atelectasia and pulmonary edema in light microscopy (Figure 5) and type I cell edema and microvilli diminutions of type II cell in electronic microscopy (Figure 6). Degrees of derangements were the worst in the control group (Figures 5, A, and 6, A, B). The LFV group showed significantly less derangement than the control group during and after CPB in all pathologic examinations (Figures 5, B, C, and 6, C; Table 1). The CPAP group showed improvements over the control group, although the benefits were less than in the LFV group (Figure 6, D, E; Table 1).
This study demonstrated metabolic and histologic damage in lung tissue in a pig model of CPB. These changes can be reduced by maintaining LFV for the duration of CPB. In our control group, the changes in tissue metabolites (ATP, ADP, AMP, and lactate) were similar to those seen in previous studies, although they were not statistically significant. Histopathologic examination also showed major atelectasis and pulmonary edema, although not severe enough to reach the level of acute respiratory distress syndrome. These findings confirm the validity of our experimental model and study protocols.

It is generally believed that one of the main causes of post-CPB lung injury is the activation of the systemic inflammatory response. Previous experimental studies have tried to suppress this reaction by various pharmacologic, ventilation, or other strategies. Some have been tested in clinical practice; however, none has demonstrated better clinical outcomes despite some improved oxygenation of arterial blood in the early period after CPB. Recent studies, in which the lung injury was compared between CABG with and without CPB, showed no significant differences in postoperative arterial oxygen level and intubation period, suggesting that CPB is not the only cause of postsurgical lung injury.

Lung atelectasis is one of the most common complications after major surgery. Evidence has been provided that the proportion of atelectasis area detected by computed tomography showed good correlation with intrapulmonary shunt ratio. It was also suggested that atelectasis seen after CPB is the result of opening the endotracheal tube to the atmosphere.

**DISCUSSION**

**FIGURE 2.** Changes in arterial blood gas analysis. Control group (open boxes). LFV group (closed black boxes). CPAP group (small dots boxes). Boxes represent interquartile range (25th–75th percentile); line within each box represents median. Bars show 10th and 90th percentiles. *P < .05 in Friedman test and P < .1 vs pre-CPB value. †P < .05 vs control group. ‡P < .05 in Kruskal-Wallis test and P < .1 vs control. CPB, Cardiopulmonary bypass; PaO₂, arterial oxygen tension; PaCO₂, arterial carbon dioxide tension; A-aDO₂, alveolar arterial oxygen gradient.

**FIGURE 3.** DNA level in BAL sample. Control group (open boxes). LFV group (closed black boxes). CPAP group (small dots boxes). Boxes represent interquartile range (25th–75th percentile); line within each box represents median. Bars show 10th and 90th percentiles. *P < .05 in Friedman test and P < .1 vs pre-CPB value. yP < .05 vs control group. CPB, Cardiopulmonary bypass.
Our findings supported the use of LFV (approximately half of pre-CPB frequency) to prevent atelectasis. A recent clinical study showed that ventilation during CPB in a patient undergoing CABG was associated with lower extravascular lung water and, more important, shorter postoperative extubation time. Other studies, however, have failed to demonstrate any benefit of ventilation during CPB on lung functions. The difference between the strategy in these studies and the strategy in this study was our choice to use LFV.

Several experimental models with CPB have also demonstrated the importance of keeping blood flow in the pulmonary artery. Gasparovic and colleagues reported that pulmonary lactate release after CPB was significantly higher in patients with prolonged mechanical ventilation and correlated to post-CPB A-aD O2. In these reports, ischemia

![Graph of ATP+ADP+AMP](image1)

![Graph of ATP/ADP](image2)

![Graph of Lactate](image3)

**FIGURE 4.** Changes in adenine nucleotides and lactate in lung tissue. Control group (open boxes). LFV group (closed black boxes). CPAP group (small dots boxes). Boxes represent interquartile range (25th–75th percentile); line within each box represents median. Bars show 10th and 90th percentiles. *P < .05 in Friedman test and P < .1 versus pre-CPB value. †P < .05 versus control group. CPB, Cardiopulmonary bypass; ADP, adenosine diphosphate; AMP, adenosine monophosphate; ATP, adenosine-5′-triphosphate.

### TABLE 1. Semiquantification of histopathologic changes in lung tissues evaluated by light and electron microscopic examinations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Atelectasis</th>
<th>Pulmonary edema</th>
<th>Edema of type I cell</th>
<th>Disappearance of microvilli in type II cell</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Before CPB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFV</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>+/−</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPAP</td>
<td>+/−</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>+/−</td>
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<tr>
<td>(End of CPB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFV</td>
<td>+/−</td>
<td>+/−</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPAP</td>
<td>+,*</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>++,*</td>
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<tr>
<td>(90 min after CPB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFV</td>
<td>+/−</td>
<td>+/−</td>
<td>−</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPAP</td>
<td>+,*</td>
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CPB, Cardiopulmonary bypass; LFV, low-frequency ventilation; CPAP, continuous positive airway pressure. Control group showed significant atelectasis and pulmonary edema 90 minutes after CPB. Control group also showed edema in type I cells and disappearance of microvilli in type II cells. LFV and CPAP groups showed less damage; however, CPAP group showed findings of proteinosis 90 minutes after CPB. Statistical analysis was applied by converting the grading to ordinal numbers (grade [−] = 0, [+] = 1, (+) = 2, (++ = 3). The final grading results were determined from the median value of all observations in each respective group. *P < .05 in Friedman test and P < .1 versus pre-CPB value. †P < .05 vs control group. †P < .05 in Kruskal-Wallis test and P < .1 versus control.
Reperfusion was obviously one of the major causes of lung damage. We have previously demonstrated a relationship among CPB time, mucin increase, and lung injury after surgery with CPB. Arterial oxygen was strongly affected by mucin accumulation in alveolar space, and this correlates with CPB time. Furthermore, DNA level in BAL fluid suggested that pulmonary abnormalities after CPB was parallel to the degree of ischemic damage. There is evidence in the literature that ventilation or inflation of the lungs with oxygen or even air reduced ischemic damage in terms of metabolic and histologic changes in the lungs. Our study showed that LFV suppressed ischemic derangement in tissue metabolism and histopathologic changes in the lungs. The technique to decrease ischemic damage in our experimental model is based on ventilation and does not influence pulmonary flow. These findings may have important clinical implications because many cardiac surgeons believe that maintaining ventilation is more practicable than keeping blood flow to the lungs during cardiac operations.

There has been controversy whether CPAP during CPB can prevent post-CPB lung injury. Some reports have linked the use of CPAP 10 cm H$_2$O with higher arterial oxygen level and lower A-aDO$_2$ after CPB. Concentration of oxygen during CPB is also controversial. Some recommended high concentration, but others suggested that this may exacerbate post-CPB lung injury. In our study, we adopted 5 cm H$_2$O as a pressure of CPAP because high pressure would interfere with the surgeon’s work. The CPAP group showed trends toward “protection” in metabolites and blood gas, although it was not with statistical significance. The beneficial effect of CPAP may not have been fully realized because of our choice of low pressure.

LFV did not reduce visualization of the surgical field in our animal model. However, the technique may create some exposure and visualization problems during inflation of the lungs or increased blood flow return, particularly in mitral valve surgery.

Study Limitations
Lung edema was only assessed by histopathology, and lung pulmonary compliance was not recorded. Because of the short recovery protocol time, the beneficial effects of LFV may only be limited to the immediate period after discontinuation of CPB.

CONCLUSIONS
We demonstrated that LFV during CPB in an experimental pig model reduced tissue metabolic and histopathologic damages in the lungs and was associated with improved postoperative gas exchange. The mode of action of this technique is probably due to reduction in ischemic changes and prevention of atelectasis. The technique is safe and simple and can be readily applied in clinical practice. A prospective, randomized study will be necessary to determine whether

FIGURE 5. Light micrographs showing alveoli 90 minutes after CPB. A, Control group showing many atelectasis and tissue pulmonary edema. B, LFV group showing normal lung tissue. C, CPAP group showing amorphous materials field in alveolar space.
these experimental findings result in improved pulmonary function in clinical practice.

The study was supported by the British Heart Foundation. We acknowledge the excellent technical assistance of MRS. Hua Lin from the Bristol Heart Institute, and the great help of Dr. Shigeru Sato from the Nippon Medical School on histopathological examination.

References
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4. Xiangming F, Yinglong L, Qiang W, Cuntao Y, Bo W, Yingmao R. Lung perfusion with Clarithromycin ameliorates lung function after cardiopulmonary bypass. 

FIGURE 6. Electron micrographs showing alveoli 90 minutes after CPB. A, Cell edema is seen in type I alveolar epithelial cells (control group). B, Degenerated microvilli are seen in type II alveolar epithelial cells (control group). C, LFV showing no damages. D, Surfactant materials filed in alveolar space (CPAP group). E, Lamellar structures and onion-like surfactant materials structures (arrow) (CPAP group). Alv-s, Alveolar space; Alv-tr, alveolar transudate; Cap, capillary.


