

Anesthesiology Rounds
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Postoperative Cognitive Dysfunction (POCD)

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Objectives:

This issue of *Anesthesiology Rounds* will help readers to:

- recognize that POCD is a clinical reality
- be aware that, although described mainly following cardiac surgery with cardiopulmonary bypass, POCD is also seen after other types of interventions
- identify high-risk patients for POCD, such as very young and very old people, alcoholics, etc.
- recognize that an inflammatory process may be fundamental to POCD and that gene expression and protein synthesis are involved
- realize that increasing brain reserves and modulation of the inflammatory response could be preventive measures to reduce POCD.

Questions: (*Only one response is correct.*)

1. It is false to say that POCD occurs mainly:
 - a. after cardiac surgery
 - b. in old patients
 - c. in alcoholics
 - d. in women.

2. Which following statements does not explain the variation in the incidence of POCD between published studies?
 - a. the timing of measurements is poorly defined
 - b. the surgical procedure is poorly identified
 - c. there is good standardization of the tests used
 - d. varying outcomes are used

3. To decrease the incidence of POCD, the following measures could be taken **except** for:
- a. decrease the inflammatory response
 - b. increase the brain reserve
 - c. use anti-inflammatory medication
 - d. control Ca⁺⁺ levels
4. Regarding peripheral inflammation and its influence on brain inflammatory response, it is false to say that:
- a. cytokines are not found in the brain
 - b. there are cytokine receptors on endothelial cells in the brain vessels
 - c. peripheral vagal stimulation by cytokines induces brain inflammatory response
 - d. metabolites of cyclooxygenase (COX) are present in the central nervous system

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