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Is Chest Physiotherapy Safe in Surgical Intensive Care?

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Objectives: Chest physiotherapy after thoracotomy is a routine procedure performed in all surgical intensive care units. Although there are few studies investigating the safety of this practice, there is no data associated with the safety of breast surgery patients. In our study, the safety of postoperative chest physiotherapy was examined.

Methods: Patients who underwent thoracotomy, completed 24 hours postoperatively and were clinically stable, underwent breathing exercises, incentive spirometry, assisted coughing and graded mobilization including chest physiotherapy. Heart rate, systolic and diastolic blood pressure, oxygen saturation and pain status changes were recorded before and after treatment and the differences were analyzed.

Results: The mean age of the patients was 56.86 ± 14.41 years, and 31% of the women were included in the study. When the changes in the follow-up parameters after physiotherapy program were examined, a statistically significant change was observed only in diastolic blood pressure.

Conclusion: According to the results obtained from our study, postoperative thoracotomy is safe. Only a statistically significant change was observed in diastolic blood pressure, which is within the physiological confidence interval.

Keywords: Thoracotomy, chest physiotherapy, hemodynamics