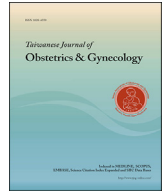




Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Taiwanese Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology

journal homepage: www.tjog-online.com

Original Article

Maternal pregnancy-induced hypertension increases the subsequent risk of transient tachypnea of the newborn: A nationwide population-based cohort study

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Accepted 15 December 2017

Keywords:

Pregnancy-induced hypertension

Hypertension in pregnancy

Gestational hypertension

Preeclampsia

Transient tachypnea of the newborn

ABSTRACT

Objective: To determine the association between pregnancy-induced hypertension (PIH) and transient tachypnea of the newborn (TTN) and to identify the predictive risk factors.**Materials and Methods:** Pregnant women with a newly diagnosed PIH (between 2000 and 2013) from the Taiwan National Health Insurance Research Database (NHIRD) were compared with a matched (with respect to age and year of delivery) cohort of pregnant women without PIH. The occurrence of TTN was evaluated in both cohorts.**Results:** Among the 23.3 million individuals registered in the NHIRD, 29,013 patients with PIH and 116,052 matched controls were identified. According to a multivariate analysis, PIH (odds ratio [OR] = 1.85, 95% confidence interval [CI] = 1.69–2.03, $p < 0.0001$), age ≥ 30 years (OR = 1.38, 95% CI = 1.26–1.51, $p < 0.0001$), primiparity (OR = 1.37, 95% CI = 1.24–1.5, $p < 0.0001$), preterm birth (OR = 3.4, 95% CI = 3.09–3.75, $p < 0.0001$), multiple births (OR = 2.54, 95% CI = 2.24–2.89, $p < 0.0001$), and cesarean section (OR = 1.71, 95% CI = 1.56–1.88, $p < 0.0001$) were independent risk factors for the development of TTN.**Conclusion:** Women with PIH have an increased risk of having infants who develop TTN compared with those without PIH. Additionally, age ≥ 30 years, primiparity, preterm birth, multiple births, and cesarean section were independent risk factors for the development of TTN.© 2018 Taiwan Association of Obstetrics & Gynecology. Publishing services by Elsevier B.V. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).

Introduction

Pregnancy-induced hypertension (PIH), including gestational hypertension, preeclampsia, or eclampsia, is a major cause of maternal morbidity and mortality [1–5]. Preeclampsia is a complication in approximately 3–5% of pregnancies [6,7] and is associated with a higher risk of neonatal death [8–10]. It is characterized by the de novo development of hypertension and proteinuria that arise after 20 weeks of gestation [11–14]. Although the exact pathogenesis of preeclampsia has not been fully elucidated, the main hypothesis is that abnormal cytotrophoblast invasion of

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spiral arterioles results in reduced uteroplacental perfusion and causes placental ischemia, followed by the release of several anti-angiogenic factors, reactive oxygen species (ROS), and inflammatory cytokines, which then lead to the onset of the clinical symptoms of preeclampsia [15–18].

Transient tachypnea of the newborn (TTN) is a respiratory disorder characterized by tachypnea that develops immediately after birth but resolves within 2–5 days [19]. Delayed reabsorption of the fetal lung fluid has been reported to be a critical mechanism underlying the development of TTN [20]. Amiloride-sensitive sodium (Na⁺) channels play an important role in fetal pulmonary fluid clearance [21], and dysfunction of those channels may result in TTN [22].

B-type natriuretic peptides (BNP), which play a role in the maintenance of extracellular fluid volume, seem to be able to reduce amiloride-sensitive Na⁺ transport [23,24]. N-terminal pro-B-type natriuretic peptide (NT-proBNP) has been shown to be significantly higher in neonates with TTN [25]. In addition, patients with preeclampsia have been shown to have higher levels of BNP and NT-proBNP [26,27]. Therefore, it is reasonable to hypothesize that BNP and NT-proBNP, induced by PIH, may be released into the fetal circulatory system and may be involved in the development of TTN. To test this hypothesis, we designed a nationwide population-based matched cohort study to assess the relationship between PIH and TTN.

Materials and Methods

Data sources

The National Health Insurance program has covered almost 98% of the population (23 million residents of Taiwan) since 1995 [28–31]. We obtained data for the current study from the National Health Insurance research database (NHIRD), which was established by The National Health Research Institute (NHRI). The NHRID protects the privacy of individuals and provides data to researchers who have the necessary ethical approvals. We obtained anonymous data from the NHRID that did not include information regarding individuals' identities.

Study design and participants

PIH patients between 20 and 50 years of age were assessed based on International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision, Clinical Modification (ICD-9-CM) codes 642.3–642.6 for the following conditions: gestational hypertension (ICD-9-CM codes 642.30, 642.31, 642.32, 642.33, and 642.34), mild preeclampsia (ICD-9-CM codes 642.40, 642.41, 642.42, 642.43, and 642.44), severe preeclampsia (ICD-9-CM codes 642.50, 642.51, 642.52, 642.53, and 642.54), and eclampsia (ICD-9-CM codes 642.60, 642.61, 642.62, 642.63, and 642.64). Only patients with a diagnosis of PIH and who had experienced an inpatient hospitalization were selected for the study to ensure diagnostic validity and to avoid any potential misclassifications.

The data for this study were obtained from January 1, 2000, to December 31, 2013. A total of 29,013 PIH patients were assessed. For each patient with PIH, four patients who were matched with respect to age and year of delivery and who did not have a history of PIH were randomly selected from the NHIRD and were included in the comparison cohort. The index date for the patients in the PIH cohort was the date of their initial PIH diagnosis. The study endpoints were defined as the date of a TTN diagnosis (ICD-9-CM: 770.6), death within 28 days after birth, or the date of the end of the study period. Pregnancy characteristics of the patients were obtained, including age, parity, gestational age, gestational number,

whether they had a cesarean section, and any comorbidities. The comorbidities in our study were as follows: diabetes mellitus (DM) (ICD-9-CM: 250), hypertension (HTN) (ICD-9-CM: 401–405), coronary artery disease (CAD) (ICD-9-CM: 410–414), dyslipidemia (ICD-9-CM: 272), chronic kidney disease (CKD) (ICD-9-CM: 585 and 403), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) (ICD-9-CM: 491.2, 493.2, and 496), and cerebrovascular disease (ICD: 430–437).

Statistical analysis

The study groups were compared using the chi-square test for categorical variables and independent *t*-tests for continuous variables. The Cox proportional hazards model [32–35] was used to identify risk factors for TTN. Control variables, such as PIH, age, parity, gestational age, gestational number, whether patients had a cesarean section, and common comorbidities, including DM, HTN, CAD, dyslipidemia, COPD, CKD, and cerebrovascular disease, were included as covariates in the univariate and multivariate model. Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) version 9.4 (SAS Institute, Inc., Cary, NC, USA) was used for the data analysis. Comparisons with a *p* value of less than 0.05 were considered statistically significant.

Results

Participant characteristics

A total of 29,013 patients with PIH and a matched cohort of 116,052 subjects were identified and included in this study. Table 1 shows the demographics and comorbidities of the PIH patients and the matched subjects. The mean patient ages were 30.96 and 30.83 years in the PIH and matched cohort groups, respectively. The majority of patients in both the PIH (56.29%) and matched cohort (56.29%) groups were older than 30 years of age. Patients with PIH had lower parity but higher preterm birth, higher multiple births, and higher cesarean section rates than patients in the comparison

Table 1
Baseline characteristics of patients with pregnancy-induced hypertension and matched cohort.

Parameters	PIH (n = 29,013)		Matched cohort (n = 116,052)		<i>p</i> value
	n	%	n	%	
Age, years, mean	30.96		30.83		
< 30	12,681	43.71	50,724	43.71	1
≥ 30	16,332	56.29	65,328	56.29	
Parity, n					
1	17,819	61.42	67,437	58.11	<.0001
≥ 2	11,194	38.58	48,615	41.89	
Gestational age					
Term	22,553	77.73	110,597	95.30	<.0001
Preterm	6,460	22.27	5,455	4.70	
Gestational number					
Singleton	27,316	94.15	113,949	98.19	<.0001
Multiple	1,697	5.85	2,103	1.81	
Cesarean section					
Yes	21,574	74.36	42,288	36.44	<.0001
No	7,439	25.64	73,764	63.56	
Comorbidities					
Diabetes mellitus	112	0.39	69	0.06	<.0001
Hypertension	266	0.92	85	0.07	<.0001
Dyslipidemia	99	0.34	90	0.08	<.0001
Coronary artery disease	26	0.09	71	0.06	0.0938
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	36	0.12	66	0.06	0.0001
Chronic kidney disease	187	0.64	158	0.14	<.0001
Cerebrovascular disease	54	0.19	87	0.07	<.0001

PIH, pregnancy-induced hypertension.

cohort. Furthermore, patients with PIH had higher prevalence of DM, HTN, dyslipidemia, COPD, CKD, and cerebrovascular disease.

Incidence of and risk factors for transient tachypnea of the newborn

The incidence of TTN was higher in the PIH group (3.84%) than in the matched cohort group (1.25%). As demonstrated in the univariate and multivariate analyses (Table 2), independent risk factors for the development of TTN included PIH (OR = 1.85, 95% CI = 1.69–2.03, $p < 0.0001$), age ≥ 30 years (OR = 1.38, 95% CI = 1.26–1.51, $p < 0.0001$), single parity (OR = 1.37, 95% CI = 1.24–1.5, $p < 0.0001$), preterm birth (OR = 3.40, 95% CI = 3.09–3.75, $p < 0.0001$), multiple births (OR = 2.54, 95% CI = 2.24–2.89, $p < 0.0001$), and cesarean section (OR = 1.71, 95% CI = 1.56–1.88, $p < 0.0001$).

Discussion

This was a nationwide population-based retrospective cohort study performed to determine whether women who developed PIH had an increased risk of having infants who developed subsequent TTN. In the current study, we assessed individuals who were diagnosed with PIH and a matched control cohort over a follow-up period of 28 days after they gave birth. A higher incidence of subsequent TTN was observed among patients with PIH compared with the control group. The results from the multivariate analysis showed that PIH was an independent risk factor for the development of TTN. Furthermore, age ≥ 30 , single parity, preterm birth, multiple births, and cesarean section were also independent risk factors for developing TTN.

TTN, a common cause of respiratory distress in newborns, often spontaneously resolves within days but may occasionally contribute to fetal morbidity because of hypoxemia, pulmonary air leakage, and persistent pulmonary hypertension [19]. The established diagnostic criteria for TTN were as follows: (1) tachypnea (respiratory rate > 60 /min) that developed during the first 6 h following delivery; (2) tachypnea that persisted for at least 12 h; (3) chest radiography findings that were consistent with TTN (e.g., hyperaeration, mild cardiomegaly, distinction of pulmonary vascular structures, or pleural or interstitial fluid); and (4) absence of hyaline membrane disease, meconium aspiration syndrome, congenital pulmonary abnormalities, and congenital heart disease [36]. The etiology of TTN has been suggested to be the delayed resorption of fetal lung fluid, which may originate from defective

amiloride-sensitive Na⁺ transport because this plays a major role in clearing the excess lung fluid during the fetal period [37].

BNP plays a key role in the regulation of cardiovascular homeostasis, blood pressure maintenance, and extracellular fluid volume [38]. The main storage form of BNP is pro-BNP, which is cleaved into active BNP, and an inert amino-terminal fragment of pro-BNP (NT-proBNP) [39]. Atrial natriuretic peptide (ANP) has been shown to reduce amiloride-sensitive Na⁺ transport by acting on natriuretic peptide receptor-A (NPR-A) and NPR-B [23]. BNP is known to act on these receptors [24] and may be implicated in neonatal lung fluid clearance. A prospective controlled study by Aydemir and colleagues revealed that neonates with TTN had increased levels of plasma NT-proBNP [25]. Several studies have shown that having hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, especially early-onset or severe preeclampsia, was associated with elevated levels of NT-proBNP [26,40,41] and BNP [27,42]. Additionally, Janus et al. found pro-BNP and NT-proBNP protein in maternal spiral arteries and in syncytiotrophoblasts in all placental samples, and they also found that women with preeclampsia had higher levels of NT-proBNP than controls. Thus, these authors suggested that the placentas in patients with PIH might produce proBNP and NT-proBNP and release them into the maternal circulation [43]. It is reasonable to theorize that if proBNP and NT-proBNP are produced by the placentas of patients who have PIH, these proteins may also be released into the fetal circulatory system, which could result in TTN.

TTN is related to surfactant deficiency [44]. Preeclampsia is associated with oxidative stress (OS) in the maternal circulatory system [16]. By sampling umbilical cord blood during delivery, Negi and colleagues demonstrated that increased OS was observed in the fetal circulatory systems in mothers who experienced preeclampsia or eclampsia [45]. Moreover, OS and ROS can inactivate surfactant by altering the structure and function of surfactant proteins [46,47]. As a result, it is reasonable to postulate that OS and ROS are generated from the placentas of patients with PIH and may also be released into the fetal circulatory system, which would lead to TTN.

Based on the above findings, we hypothesized that maternal PIH may lead to an increased risk of subsequent TTN. A prospective study conducted by Badran et al. showed that maternal hypertension was an independent risk factor for TTN and respiratory distress syndrome (RDS) [48]. In our study, the incidence rate of TTN was 1.85-fold higher in patients who experienced PIH (95% CI = 1.69–2.03, $p < 0.0001$) compared with those in the matched control cohort. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that abnormal placental products, such as pro-BNP, OS, and ROS, which are

Table 2
Analyses of risk factors for transient tachypnea of newborn among the patients with pregnancy-induced hypertension and comparison cohort.

Parameters	Univariate analysis		Multivariate analysis ^a	
	OR (95% CI)	<i>p</i> value	OR (95% CI)	<i>p</i> value
PIH				
Yes vs. No	3.29 (3.03–3.56)	<.0001	1.85 (1.69–2.03)	<.0001
Age, years				
≥ 30 vs. < 30	1.69 (1.56–1.84)	<.0001	1.38 (1.26–1.51)	<.0001
Parity				
1 vs. ≥ 2	1.85 (1.70–2.02)	<.0001	1.37 (1.24–1.50)	<.0001
Gestational age				
Preterm vs. Term	6.15 (5.65–6.70)	<.0001	3.40 (3.09–3.75)	<.0001
Gestational number				
Multiple vs. Singleton	7.12 (6.35–7.99)	<.0001	2.54 (2.24–2.89)	<.0001
Cesarean section				
Yes vs. No	2.92 (2.68–3.18)	<.0001	1.71 (1.56–1.88)	<.0001

PIH, pregnancy-induced hypertension; OR, odds ratio; CI, confidence interval.

^a OR is adjusted for group differences in age, parity, gestational age, gestational number, cesarean section, diabetes mellitus, hypertension, dyslipidemia, coronary artery disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, chronic kidney disease, and cerebrovascular disease.

induced by PIH, could exist in the fetal circulatory system and may be involved in the pathogenesis of TTN. However, more studies are needed to confirm these results.

The current study showed that preterm birth, cesarean section, and multiple births were independent risk factors for the development of TTN. Previous epidemiological studies have indicated that low gestational age, low birth weight, and cesarean section are well-established risk factors for TTN [19,36,49,50]. It has been suggested that fetal lung fluid clearance does not occur in prematurely delivered infants or in infants who are delivered via cesarean section before the onset of labor [51,52]. Immature epithelial Na⁺ channel expression, which causes defective Na⁺ transport, may be a key reason for the development of TTN in these two types of infants [37,53,54]. An Italian study by Dani et al. showed that twin pregnancy was also a risk factor for TTN [36]. In most multiple births, infants are delivered by cesarean section at a preterm gestational age. It therefore makes sense that mothers who give birth to multiples have infants who are at an increased risk of developing TTN.

This study had a longitudinal, large population-based design. Nevertheless, several limitations inherent to the use of insurance claims databases must be taken into account. One limitation is that the diagnosis of PIH in the NHIRD was based on the ICD-9 codes. Data on patients' blood pressure, proteinuria, and symptoms were not available in the database. Another limitation is that many demographic variables were not available in the database, such as body mass index, smoking status, lifestyle, socioeconomic status, and family medical history. These factors would have been valuable for assessing other factors that may be associated with PIH and TTN. A final limitation is that the diagnostic criteria for PIH have changed over time, which could result in heterogeneous patient populations across studies and may restrict comparisons. Regardless of these limitations, our study was based on a nationwide, population-based database that included nearly all of Taiwan's residents. The large sample size in our study contributed to its substantial statistical power and revealed an obvious association between PIH and TTN with minimal selection biases.

In conclusion, the current study demonstrated that maternal PIH increased the subsequent risk for TTN. In addition, age ≥ 30 years, primiparity, preterm birth, multiple births, and cesarean section were shown to be independent risk factors for TTN.

Ethics approval and consent to participate

The Kaohsiung Veterans General Hospital (VGHKS15-EM4–01) Institutional Review Board approved this study.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements

We thank the Economy Company Ltd. for their technical and English editing services. We are grateful for the use of the data from the National Health Insurance Research Database that was provided by the Statistics Center of the Department of Health and Welfare. The interpretations and conclusions contained herein do not represent those of the Bureau of Health Promotion, Taiwan. This study is partly supported by grants from the Ministry of Science and Technology, Executive Yuan (MOST 101-2314-B-010-038-MY3, and MOST 106-2314-B-075-061-MY3), and Taipei Veterans General Hospital (V104C-095; V105C-096; V106C-129, V106D23-001-MY2-1, and V106A-012).

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