

Effect of pentoxifylline administration on an experimental rat model of intraperitoneal adhesion

 Omer Lutfi Akgul¹,  Erkan Dalbasi²,  Mesut Gul³,  Ulas Alabalik⁴

¹Clinic of General Surgery, Genesis Hospital, Diyarbakir, Turkey

²Clinic of General Surgery, Memorial Hospital, Diyarbakir, Turkey

³Clinic of General Surgery, Medicalpark Hospital, Gaziantep, Turkey

⁴Department of Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Dicle University, Diyarbakir, Turkey

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Abstract

Aim: Intraabdominal adhesions are the pathological structures that form between the peritoneal surfaces throughout the healing of the peritoneal surface defects with scar formation. Adhesions are a significant problem because they affect the quality of life, lead to morbidity and mortality, and increase health expenses. We have investigated the effectiveness of pentoxifylline (PTX), which is a methyl xanthine derivative, on the development of experimentally generated intraperitoneal adhesions in rats.

Materials and Methods: In our study, 30 Wistar Albino rats, each weighing an average of 200-250 grams, were used. In this study, 3 groups of 10 rats were formed. As the adhesion model, cecotomy method was preferred and applied. Groups were classified as; the sham group, control group and PTX group. In the Sham group, merely laparotomy was applied, the control group was intraperitoneal 5 cc isotonic after the cecotomy, and the PTX group was intraperitoneal 100 mg / kg after the cecotomy. Rats were sacrificed on the 15th day. Macroscopic, microscopic adhesion and adhesion tissues were evaluated with regard to hydroxyproline levels.

Results: In the comparison of the groups from the macroscopic point of view, there was a noteworthy difference in adhesion between the sham group and the PTX group ($p = 0.027$) and between the control group and the PTX group ($p = 0.001$).

Conclusion: In this study, it was observed that PTX can reduce intraabdominal adhesion and increase the level of hydroxyproline after surgery.

Keywords: Adhesion; abdominal surgery; pentoxifylline

INTRODUCTION

Once the mesothelial layer of the peritoneal cavity is damaged as a result of the intra-abdominal adhesions injures due trauma, ischemia, inflammation and infection, fibrin is formed on the damaged surface as a result of bleeding and protein leakagetissue. Fibrin is a sticky substance that bonds the damaged tissues and which provides healing of the injured This procedure starts within three hours, on the fifth day, fibroblasts are concealed over the fibrin network, and adhesions are formed. These adhesions may be a thin connective tissue tape or a thick and fibrous band that is heavily bleeding. Typically, adhesions can occur between areas that cannot be covered by mesothelium, as well as between normal tissues in contact with the injured peritoneum surface (1,2). The most common reason of abdominal adhesions are former abdominal surgeries. It may cause severe complications such as chronic abdominal pain, bowel obstruction and infertility. Even though there have

been many studies to prevent adhesions in the past, an effective method that has been used habitually has not been revealed. Intraabdominal adhesions remain to be a significant problem currently, as they affect the patient's quality of life, increase morbidity and mortality, and increase health expenses (3).

In our study we aimed to investigate, Pentoxyl as a methyl xanthine derivative, decreases blood viscosity by decreasing plasma fibrinogen concentration by increasing erythrocyte cell deformability, decreasing platelet adhesion and aggregation, decreasing leukocyte activation, and endothelial damage caused by leukocyte activation (decreasing the endothelial damage caused by leukocyte as a pentoxyl) and demonstrate its efficiency in the created intraabdominal adhesion model.

MATERIALS and METHODS

Study Design

This experimental study, carried out in this laboratory

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Corresponding Author: Omer Lutfi Akgul, Clinic of General Surgery, Genesis Hospital, Diyarbakir, Turkey

E-mail: omerlutfi5@gmail.com

by obtaining the approval of the Ethical Committee of the Experimental Animals Local Ethics Committee of T. C. Diyarbakir Dicle University Prof.Dr. Dr. Sabahattin Payzin Health Sciences Research and Application Center Experimental Animals Local Ethics Committee dated 12.03.2013 and numbered 2012/59.

In the study, 30 Wistar Albino rats, each weighing an average of 200-250 grams, were used. The rats were kept at the room temperature and in average cages with a maximum of five groups in a 12-hour night and 12-hour day cycle. Ordinary laboratory food and water were given to the rats in the preoperative and postoperative period. After the adaptation process, three different groups were formed by randomizing, each being 10 rats: Group of control, Sham and Pentoxifylline (PTX). Pentoxifylline (Trental® CR) which used in the study was obtained from Sanofi Aventis. It is designed to be 100 mg / kg.

The operations were performed in sterile environments. Anesthesia of all rats was provided by intramuscular administration of 50 mg / kg ketamine hydrochloride (Ketalar®, Pfizer, Istanbul) and 5 mg / kg xylazine hydrochloride (Rompon®, Bayer, Şişli, Istanbul) under aseptic circumstances. After being anesthetized rats in a supine position by shaving the abdominal wall, and at that point povidone iodine (Isosol®, Central Lab. Ilac San. Turkey) and antisepsis were provided. A 3 cm midline incision was prepared after anesthesia to apply the adhesion model. After determining that there is no adhesion in the abdomen, the cecum was exposed. Approximately 1 cm of cecotomy was implemented on the antimesenteric side of the cecum taken out of the abdomen with a number 11 scalpel. The cecotomy was restored constantly on a single coat with 4/0 vicryl and placed in the first place in the abdomen. Consequently, the abdominal wall of the rats was sutured with 3/0 vicryl and the skin was sutured one by one with 3/0 silk sutures.

To form the sham group, the abdominal walls of 10 rats, which were found to have no adhesion following the midline incision, were uninterruptedly sutured with 3/0 vicryl, and the skin was individually sutured with 3/0 silk sutures. Subsequently applying the adhesion model to 10 rats in the control group, 5 cc isotonic was given to them intraperitoneally into the abdomen. Later applying adhesion model to 10 rats in the PTX group, 100 mg / kg PTX was given intraperitoneally into the abdomen.

Later the rats were managed intravenously with Ketamine and Xylazine at the ordinary anesthesia dose on the fifteenth day; sacrifice was obtained by taking intracardiac blood. Consequently, the abdomen was retracted downwards with a U incision and thus maximum vision was accomplished.

Adhesions at the macroscopic level were evaluated quantitatively considering the Mazuji classification. The assessment was carried out by two distinct persons, in accordance with the classification formerly described to them, and the way of double-blind (Table 1) (4).

Table 1. Mazuji's macroscopic adhesion classification

Grade 0: No adhesion

Grade 1: Very fine and fragmented irregular adhesion

Grade 2: Medium density and fragmented adhesion that can be separated easily

Grade 3: Intense, not easily separable regular adhesion

Grade 4: Very intense, not easily separable, homogeneous adhesion

Following the macroscopic evaluation, whereas the affected organs were excised together with the tape in the adhesions emerging adhesions, the cecum was excised for pathological sample including all layers except the anterior wall and parietal peritoneum skin. The pathological samplings were then fixed in containers which hold 10% buffered formaline. Tracks followed by classical laboratory method were embedded in paraffin blocks and 5 micrometer sections were taken on the slide. It was stained with hematoxylin-Eosin dye and examined by light microscopy. The pathologist who made the inspection wasn't aware of from which group the fragments were taken. After histopathological assessment, the fragments were subjected to microscopic grading defined by Zühlke (Table 2) (5,6).

Table 2. Zühlke's microscopic adhesion classification

Grade 1: Weak connective tissue, rich cell, new and old fibrin, thin reticulin fibriles

Grade 2: Connective tissue which has cells and capillaries. Few collagen fibers

Grade 3: Thicker connective tissue. Few cells and elastic and smooth muscle fibers, more vessels

Grade 4: Old firm granulation tissue, cell-poor, serosal layers that are hardly distinguishable

From the tissues taken for histopathological sampling, 1 gram was weighed and hydrolyzed at 121 degrees for 5 hours in 1 ml of acidic buffer. Then, the working material was obtained by centrifuging at 5000 rpm for 20 minutes. Tissue hydroxyproline level was calculated as mg / L / gr / tissue by assessing the absorbance of the formed material at 121 degrees at 560 nm (colorimetric). (Used Kit Lot No: 41100, Kit: Hydroxyproline Extra, Colorimetric Determination, Brand: Far / Italy).

Statistical Analysis

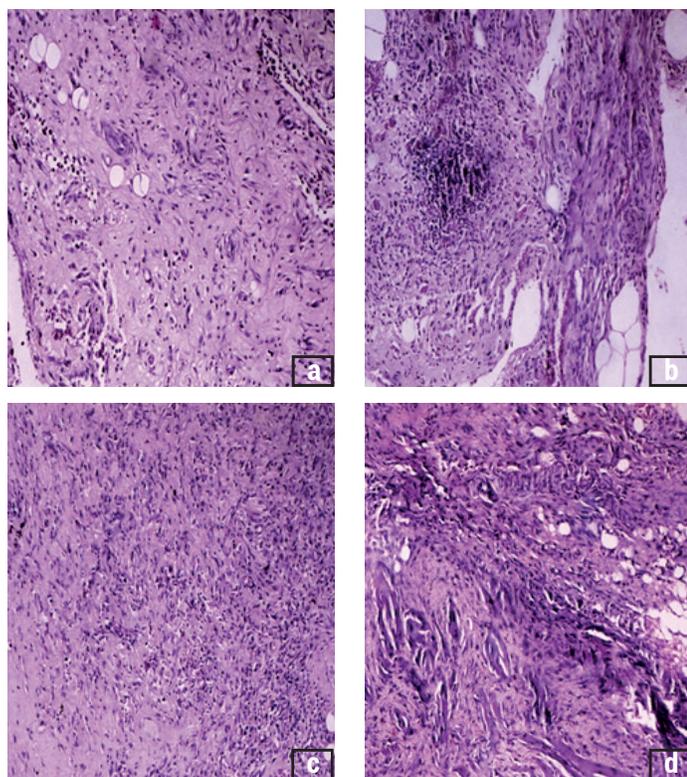
While assessing the findings acquired in the study, SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) for Windows 17.0 program was used for statistical analysis. Results were estimated at 95% confidence interval and $p < 0.05$. Descriptive statistical methods (frequency count, mean, standard deviation of the mean) were used to calculate the study data. Chi-Square and Fisher's exact test were

used to compare classified data between groups. Non-parametric methods considering the small size of the sample included in the study; Kruskal Wallis Analysis, Mann Whitney U Test was used. In addition, Bonferroni and Tamhane tests, which are among the Anova and Post Hoc tests, were used. Anova test was applied to macroscopic and microscopic results. One-way Anova test was used to evaluate variance homogeneity in groups. Bonferroni and Tamhane tests, which are among the Post Hoc tests, were used to find out which group caused the difference.

RESULTS

There was no loss of subjects throughout the experimental study. Congenital adhesion was not detected in the first laparotomy. Incisional hernia and wound dehiscence were not noticed in rats in which experimental study was performed.

In histopathological assessment, the views of grade 1, grade 2, grade 3, grade 4 in the materials of the subjects graded according to the Zühlke classification are shown in Figure 1, respectively. The data obtained by determining the hydroxyproline level is shown in Table 3.



a. grade 1 microscopic image; b. grade 2 microscopic image; c. grade 3 microscopic image; d. grade 4 microscopic image

Figure 1. Histopathological specimen images

Kruskal Wallis test of macroscopic values ($X^2 = 13,779$; $P = 0.001$); in addition, the results of the Post Hoc Bonferroni multiple comparison test applied after the ANOVA ($F = 9.26$; $P = 0.001$) test are given in Table 4 and 5.

When macroscopic results are assessed statistically; There was no substantial difference in adhesion between

the sham group and the control group ($p = 0.511$). There was a substantial difference in adhesion between the control group and the PTX group ($p = 0.001$). In PTX group, adhesion was found to be considerably less macroscopically than the control group. There was a significant difference in adhesion between the Sham group and the PTX group ($p=0.027$). Comparison of macroscopic results between groups are specified in Figure 2.

Table 3. Tissue hydroxyproline values by groups (mg/L/g/doku)

Subject	Sham	Control	Pentoxifylline
1	82.68	47.25	117
2	47.25	56.25	92.25
3	59.06	56.25	63
4	70.87	38.25	60.75
5	59.06	58.50	56.25
6	47.25	51.75	78.75
7	82.68	40.50	112.50
8	70.87	65.25	78.75
9	70.87	45	60.75
10	47.25	24.75	101.25

Table 4. ANOVA test results

	Subject	Average	Standard Deviation	95% Security	Interval
Macroscopic View					
Sham	10	1.50	0.52	1.12	1.88
Control	10	2	1.15	1.17	2.83
PTX	10	0.50	0.52	0.12	0.88
Microscopic View					
Sham	10	1.10	0.31	0.87	1.33
Control	10	3.20	0.78	2.64	3.76
PTX	10	1.60	0.51	1.23	1.97

PTX: Pentoxifylline

Table 5. Post Hoc Bonferroni test results of macroscopic values

Macroscopi	$P(<0.05)$	Average Difference
Sham - Control	0.511	-0.50
Control - PTX	0.001	1.50
Sham - PTX	0.027	1

PTX: Pentoxifylline

Kruskal-Wallis test of microscopic values was applied ($X^2=21.052$; $P=0.001$), In addition, the results of the Post Hoc TAMHANE multiple comparison test performed after the ANOVA test ($F = 36.50$; $P = 0.001$) are given in Table 6.

Once microscopic results are assessed statistically; there was a noteworthy difference in adhesion between the sham group and the control group ($p=0.0001$).

There was a noteworthy difference in adhesion between the control group and the PTX group ($p=0.0001$). Adhesion was found to be suggestively higher than the other two groups in the control group. Adhesion in the PTX group compared to the control group was found to be suggestively less microscopically. There was no important difference in adhesion between the Sham group and the PTX group ($p=0.058$). Comparisons of microscopic results are given in Figure 3.

Macroscopic results

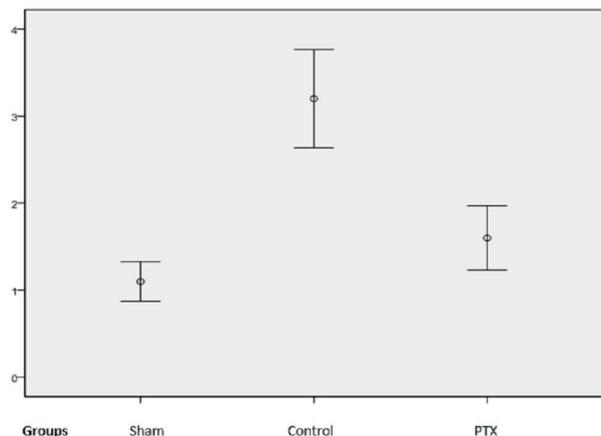


Figure 2. Comparison of macroscopic results

Table 6. Post Hoc Tamhane test results of microscopic values		
Microscopi	P(<0.05)	Average Difference
Sham - Control	0.0001	-2.10
Control - PTX	0.0001	1.60
Sham - PTX	0.058	-0.50

PTX: Pentoxifylline

Microscopic Results

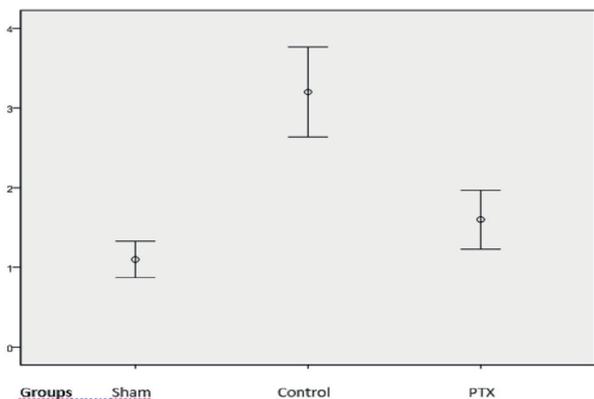


Figure 3. Comparison of microscopic results

After hydroxyproline levels are assessed statistically; there was a important difference between the sham group and the control group in terms of hydroxyproline amount ($p=0.046$). There was a momentous difference between the control group and PTX group in terms of hydroxyproline amount ($p=0.03$). The amount of hydroxyproline was highest in the PTX group. No important difference was

found between Sham group and PTX group in terms of hydroxyproline amount ($p=0.128$). A comparison of hydroxyproline levels are given in Figure 4. ANOVA test was used to compare tissue hydroxyproline levels. The results are shown in Table 7. Kruskal-Wallis test of hydroxyproline levels ($X^2=13,46$; $P=0,001$). In addition, the results of the Post Hoc Tamhane's multiple comparison test applied after the ANOVA test ($F= 10.186$; $P= 0.001$); are given in Table 8.

Hydroxyproline

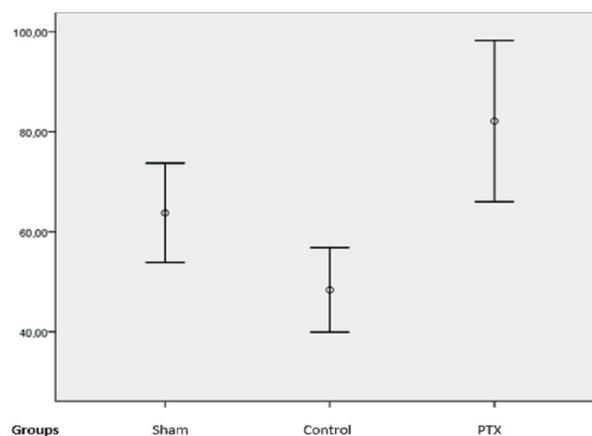


Figure 4. Comparison of hydroxyproline levels

Table 7. ANOVA test results of hydroxyproline levels							
	N	Average	Standard Deviation	Min	Max	95% Security	Interval
Sham	10	63.78	13.86	47.25	82.68	53.86	73.70
Control	10	48.37	11.82	24.75	65.25	39.91	56.83
PTX	10	82.12	22.55	56.25	117.00	65.98	98.26
Total	30	64.76	21.39	24.75	117.00	56.77	72.75

PTX: Pentoxifylline

Table 8. Post Hoc TAMHANE test results of hydroxyproline levels		
Hydroxyproline	P(<0.05)	Average Difference
Sham - Control	0.046	15.40
Control - PTX	0.030	-33.75
Sham - PTX	0.128	-18.34

PTX: Pentoxifylline

DISCUSSION

In the current study, PTX was found to be effective in preventing adhesion, both microscopically and macroscopically. In addition, the hydroxyproline level increased the most in the PTX group.

To decrease intra-abdominal adhesions, effort should be on preventing tissue damage, using suitable sewing materials and surgical techniques, keeping the operation time as short as possible and reducing intra-peritoneal exudates. Adhesions basis augmented morbidity, mortality

and cost due to severe complications such as intestinal obstruction, infertility, chronic abdominal and pelvic pain, and complicating subsequent surgical interventions (7).

It comprises diverse pathological procedures such as the development of postoperative intra-abdominal adhesion, posttraumatic immune activation, inflammatory response and fibrinolysis imbalance (8). For that reason, ideal adhesion inhibitors; it should not damage peritoneal mesothelial cells, that is, it should be complete intact. It should accelerate peritoneal wound healing and be fully absorbed. If it is not completely absorbed, it may cause more adhesion by creating granulomas. Absorption time should be between two and five days in agreement with the pathophysiology of adhesion formation. It must have viscosity to provide separation between surfaces (9).

Most of the studies to inhibit postoperative intraabdominal adhesion formation have been done with trauma models formed on peritoneal and serosal surfaces. To produce peritoneal adhesions, injured uterus horn model, peritoneal damage model, ileal transection model, colon anastomosis model, small intestine anastomosis model, bacterial peritonitis model, and clamping model, sponge disc implantation into the peritoneum, cecal abrasion models were used (10,11).

The Cecotomy model we use in our study is the recent adhesion model. Dalkılıç et al. (12), by using this model, they examined the effect of intraperitoneal taurolidine use on adhesions after surgery in rats. In addition to this, they examined the effect of modified chitosan-dextran gel in preventing peritoneal adhesions in rats after the use of the cecotomy adhesion model Lauder and et al. (13) and obtained positive results to prevent adhesion.

Pentoxifylline is a xanthine-derived phosphodiesterase inhibitor drug while Pentoxifylline is a effective peripheral vasodilator. Its main therapeutic efficacy is due to its hemorheologic effects, which aggregates blood flow and oxygenation of tissues (14). In studies realized with PTX, high doses such as 100 mg / kg and 200 mg / kg have been used and its advantageous effect has been shown to increase dose-dependent (15). Nevertheless, toxic effects have been reported in treatments of 200 mg / kg and above (16). In our study, PTX was used at a dose of 100 mg / kg.

In ordinary human dermal fibroblast culture, PTX has been revealed to impede IL-1 induced proliferation whereas at the same time stimulating collagen synthesis, glucose aminoglycan and fibronectin production, while stimulating collagenase activity (17).

A small number of studies of PTX were found in the inhibition of intraabdominal adhesions when the literature was reviewed. In the Kaleli et al. rat uterine horn model they found that pentoxifylline reduced intraabdominal adhesions (18). They informed that it decreased intraperitoneal adhesion formation in anastomosis region after intestinal resection in lai et al rats (19). Chalkiadakis et al. showed that it reduced adhesion in a peritonitis-induced rat model (20). Steinleitner et al. showed that pentoxifylline did not decrease adhesion development

in rabbit uterine horn model (21). Tarhan et al. showed that intraperitoneal and intravenous pentoxifylline decreased adhesion development due to activation of the peritoneal fibrinolysis system in rats given cecal abrasion (22). Mendes et al. showed that cilostazol and pentoxifylline decrease the adhesion development by decreasing angiogenesis, inflammation and fibrosis in the intraabdominal adhesion model produced by sponge disc implantation into the peritoneum (23). Boztosun et al. showed the effect of methylene blue, pentoxifylline and enoxaparin on intraperitoneal adhesion in the rat uterine horn model. In this study, the result of pentoxifylline on adhesion formation was not determined and methylene blue and enoxaparin decreased adhesion formation. They found that methylene blue decreased adhesion markers by performing on angiogenesis (24). Yang YL et al. In their experimental study on rats, they applied 100 mg / kg PTX intraperitoneal quotidian, starting two days before surgery, and revealed that they reduced intraabdominal adhesion. In the same study, they found that PTX increased the protein levels in the adhesion area and reduced the number of ki67 + / CD31 + cells. Lastly, in the PTX-treated group, they observed a decrease in the expression of F4 / 80 +, FSP-1 + and α -SMA + cells at the adhesion site (25). In our study, we found that PTX reduced macroscopic and microscopic intraabdominal adhesions in accordance with the literature.

Numerous studies have used tissue hydroxyproline level as an indicator of collagen quantity. Hydroxyproline is mainly found in collagen. It shows 13% of the amino acid content of the molecule. It contains glycine, proline, hydroxyproline, hydroxylysine in its collagen content. Hydroxyproline and hydroxylysine are collagen-specific amino acids (26).

High tissue hydroxyproline level indicates high collagen synthesis. The tissue level of hydroxyproline, one of the main ingredients of collagen, is a decent indicator of the wound healing process (27). In our study, hydroxyproline level was higher in PTX group.

CONCLUSION

As a result of the experimental study we conducted to prevent intra-abdominal adhesions, which is still a serious problem today, we can say that; PTX can reduce intraabdominal adhesion and increase tissue hydroxyproline level after surgery.

Competing Interests: The authors declare that they have no competing interest.

Financial Disclosure: There are no financial supports.

Ethical Approval: Research project on Effect of Pentoxifylline Administration on an Experimental Rat Model of Intraperitoneal Adhesion with protocol number 2012/59 was approved by the ethics committee.

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