

Ask the Experts

What is the best way to sedate a cardiogenic shock patient for rapid sequence intubation?

Answer

Pinny Halpern MD

Specialist in Anesthesia, Critical Care and Emergency Medicine; Director of Emergency Department, Sourasky (Ichilov) Hospital, Tel Aviv

Medications such as ketamine and etomidate have little or no effect on cardiovascular function, and thus preserve blood pressure and coronary perfusion. Ketamine may have some drawbacks: on the one hand it may produce tachycardia, thus increasing MVO₂ and on the other hand, in severely catecholamine depleted patients (more than 24 hrs of shock, sympathomimetic therapy), its intrinsic negative inotropic effect may become manifest.

A "combined anesthesia" approach, using half doses each of ketamine (i.e. 1mg/kg) and midazolam (i.e. 0.03mg/kg) may be best. A 70 kg adult will thus receive ketamine 70mg and midazolam 2.5mg. Succinyl choline should be added for rapid-sequence induction intubation.

