

EDITORIAL

AFTERALL SOMETHING NEW IN THE PRACTICE OF ANAESTHESIA

Since the establishment of anaesthesia on firm grounds, as a clinical specialty, its pace has been a slow one. Only very occasionally being interrupted by an advancement or an invention which cast longlasting impact on the practice. The past fifty years witnessed intorduction of a lot many newer drugs and a host of newer techniques, but the laryngeal mask airway is one thing that has changed the whole concept of maintaining the airway. Thought by some to lie inbetween conventional face mask and the endotroacheal tube, LMA has rapidly secured its place in anaesthesia practice. Since its introduction in 1988, it has gained reputation all over the world and even third world countries like Pakistan do not lag behind in its clinical use. More and more anaesthesiologists in our country are acquiring the appliance and the necessary skill to use it. Military anaesthesiologists are on the fore-front in this regard and almost all of our medical facilities have been provided with a range of this useful tool. New modified versions like LMA – Fastrach and LMA-Flexible will follow in the days to come, regardless the cost.

Lt Col Tariq H. Khan's article on 'Laryngeal Mask Airway' in this issue of 'APIC' has encompassed almost every aspect of the subject. The readers will difinitely be enlightened about the diverse uses in various subsets of anaesthesia practice. The most useful of these is its ability to maintain airway in a crisis or on the scene of mass casualty happening, without the use of conventional laryngoscopy. It requires little practice to be able to insert it successfully, and even medical assistants can use it and ventilate a patient in an emergency. LMA fastrach, specifically designed for blind intubation will soon be found in emergency medical kits all over. It can be used to intubate a patient in the field conditions and inside the hospital wards by less skilled persons, and help save lives.

The future holds many promises for the anaesthetists, and they will continue to be regarded as the mighty force behind the life-saving medical machinery inside the hospital as well as in the field. Their skills in maintenance of airway will remain unmatched and unchallenged; still they have a long way to go, but with full motivation and dedication. The nation deserves the best out of them.

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