Succinylcholine is an ultra short acting depolarizing neuromuscular blocking agent with high affinity for acetylcholine receptor sites. Initially, it can cause fasciculations that are soon followed by sustained flaccid skeletal muscle paralysis. Onset of paralysis is less then one minute following IV administration. The effects, including apnea, last approximately 4-6 minutes with IV use. There is no effect on level of consciousness. Therefore the pt must be adequately sedated before giving a paralytic like sux.

Indications and Administration

1. Rapid sequence induction (RSI).
   a. **Adult** – 1.0 - 1.5 mg/kg IV push. Use the higher dose for IM use. Consider also IO push when IV access can not be obtained.
   b. **Pediatric** - <10 yrs. old 1.0 – 2.0 mg/kg IV or IO push.

Notes

1. Causes apnea. Patient will require ventilatory support until medication wears off.
2. Watch for fasciculations. This indicates depolarization has occurred and intubation can be attempted once they have stopped.
3. Succinylcholine has no effect on consciousness and pain threshold. Conscious patients will need adequate sedation before and after the use of a paralytic.
4. Side effects include the following: apnea, malignant hyperthermia, dysrhythmias, hypertension, cardiac arrest, hyperkalemia, increased intraocular pressure and fasciculations.
5. Contraindications Include: patients with known hypersensitivity to the drug. Relative contraindications: patients with known low plasma pseudocholinesterase, angle closure glaucoma, penetrating eye injuries, malignant hypertension, significant burns greater than 8 hours old and significant crush injuries greater than 8 hours old.
6. Absorption: Onset: 0.5 to 1 minute IV; 2 to 3 minutes IM. Duration: 4-6 minutes IV; 10-30 minutes IM.