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Title: Bronchoscopic practice in Japan

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Body: Background and Objective: To investigate the current state of mechanisms to ensure the safety of bronchoscopic practice, the Japan Society for Respiratory Endoscopy conducted a national survey. Methods: A questionnaire survey was conducted over the course of 1 year (2010). A questionnaire was mailed to 538 facilities authorized by the Society. Results: Responses were obtained from 511 facilities (95.0%). Rigid bronchoscopes were used in only 18.5% of the facilities, while mobile/thin bronchoscopes were used in $\geq 50\%$, and fluoroscopy systems were used in 99.8%. Biopsies were performed after discontinuation of therapy in patients receiving antiplatelet drugs and anticoagulants in 96.7% and 97.4% of the facilities, respectively. Atropine was administered for premedication in 67.5% of the facilities, a decrease from previous surveys. Intravenous sedation was given in 36.1% of the facilities. In 21.9% of these, the procedure was conducted in the outpatient clinic for $\geq 70\%$ of patients. A bronchoscope was orally inserted in $\geq 70\%$ of patients in 95.7% of the facilities. Intravenous access was maintained during the examination in 92.5% of the facilities, oxygen saturation was monitored during examinations in 99.0%, oxygen was administered in 97.6%, and resuscitation equipment was available in 96%. In 98.6% of the facilities, bronchoscopes were disinfected using an automatic washing machine, but glutaraldehyde was used in 42.2%. Conclusions: Japan-specific characteristics in bronchoscopic practice were identified. Whether procedures used in Japan meet international guidelines with respect to safety should be monitored continuously. In addition, a Japanese evidence-based consensus is needed.