Vagal Maneuvers

General

Vagal maneuvers work by stimulating the autonomic nervous systems vagus nerve. This in turn may cause an intrinsic decrease in HR avoiding the need for other therapies in the presence of Narrow Complex Tachycardia.

Indications

- Narrow Complex Tachycardia

Contraindications

- None for Valsalva maneuver

Procedure

1. Ensure that patient is cardiac monitoring and 12-lead has been performed ruling out other possible etiologies.
2. If indicated, oxygen should be applied, and vascular access obtained.
3. Record the ECG rhythm continuously while performing all Vagal maneuvers.
4. Instruct the patient to cough forcefully several times. If this is ineffective proceed to the Valsalva maneuver.

Valsalva Maneuver

1. Have the patient take a deep breath and “bear down” against a closed glottis, as if trying to "clear" or "pop" his or her ears. Other descriptions include “bear down” as if taking a bowel movement. Have the patient perform this for as long as they can. (Alternative method: Remove plunger from a small syringe and instruct patient to blow through small end.)
2. If no conversion, repeat the procedure, up to three attempts total.