

**Table 3.** Serum levels of the stress hormones at the various time-points of the study

	<b>Time-point</b>	<b>SHAM</b>	<b>SEVO</b>	<b>DESF</b>	<b>PROP</b>
<b>NA (ng/ml)</b>	t <sub>0</sub>	1.02±0.42	1.05±0.40	0.90±0.42	0.92±0.36
	t <sub>1</sub>	1.28±0.45	1.95±0.77 (*, .019) (†, .002)	1.25±0.57	0.86±0.22
	t <sub>2</sub>	1.59±0.90	1.30±1.22	1.12±0.76	1.17±0.74
<b>Cortisol (µg/dl)</b>	t <sub>0</sub>	3.32±0.52	2.69±0.96	3.03±1.08	2.46±1.11
	t <sub>1</sub>	6.45±0.93	4.16±2.28	4.70±2.77	5.68±3.18 (#, .002)
	t <sub>2</sub>	2.82±1.27	8.12±5.19 (#, .039) (†, .006)	6.39±2.97 (†, .019)	2.01±2.30
<b>ACTH (ng/ml)</b>	t <sub>0</sub>	5.91±1.08	5.91±1.98	7.10±2.86	4.79±1.94
	t <sub>1</sub>	13.32±1.85 ** (.003)	13.58±7.08 * (.018)	11.94±2.45 * (.035)	9.18±3.31 ** (.001)
	t <sub>2</sub>	11.37±3.45	14.76±8.16 (*, .047) (††, .045)	9.34±2.31	7.48±3.81
<b>β-END (ng/ml)</b>	t <sub>0</sub>	0.367±0.133	0.295±0.197	0.309±0.117	0.360±0.137
	t <sub>1</sub>	0.804±0.288 * (.023)	0.899±0.494 ** (.006)	1.019±0.514 * (.010)	0.880±0.445 ** (.008)
	t <sub>2</sub>	0.886±0.354 * (.020)	0.852±0.289 ** (.002)	0.858±0.330 ** (.006)	0.615±0.145 * (.012)

ACTH, adrenocorticotropic hormone; β-END, β-endorphin; NA, noradrenaline; (†), p <0.01 of groups SEVO or DESF compared to group PROP; (††), p <0.05 of group SEVO compared to group PROP; #, p <0.05 within group; \*, p <0.05 compared to time-point 0 within the group; \*\*, p <0.01 compared to time-point t<sub>0</sub> within the group; t<sub>0</sub>, immediately after premedication; t<sub>1</sub>, 20 min after starting the anaesthetic agent and at end of surgery; t<sub>2</sub>, 4 hours after starting the anaesthetic agent. Exact p values for statistically significant differences are shown inside parentheses. Values are presented as mean±SD. SEVO: sevoflurane; DESF: desflurane; PROP: propofol. (To convert to SI units multiply by 27.59 for cortisol values and by 0.22 for ACTH values).