

Wrong Site Surgery Should Not Occur In This Day And Age!

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Abstract : For all surgeons, there is one preventable but still highly occurring complication - wrong site surgeries. They can have potentially catastrophic, irreversible, or even fatal consequences on patients. With the exponential development of microsurgery and the use of advanced technological tools, the consequences of operating on the wrong side, anatomical part, or even person is seen as the most visible and destructive of all surgical errors and perhaps the error that is dreaded by most clinicians as it threatens their licenses and arouses feelings of guilt. Despite the implementation of the WHO surgical safety checklist more than a decade ago, the incidence of wrong-site surgeries remains relatively high, leading to tremendous physical and psychological repercussions for the clinicians involved, as well as a financial burden for the healthcare institution. In this presentation, the authors explore various factors which can lead to wrong site surgery - a combination of environmental and human factors and evaluate their impact amongst patients, practitioners, their families, and the medical industry. Major contributing factors to these "never events" include deviations from checklists, excessive workload, and poor communication. Two real-life cases are discussed, and systems that can be implemented to prevent these errors are highlighted alongside lessons learnt from other industries. The authors suggest that reinforcing speaking-up, implementing medical professional trainings, and higher patient's involvements can potentially improve safety in surgeries and electrosurgeries.

Keywords : wrong side surgery, never events, checklist, workload, communication

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