

SUMMARY OF:

SURGICAL SITE INFECTIONS IN COLON SURGERY

THE PATIENT, THE PROCEDURE, THE HOSPITAL, AND THE SURGEON

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BACKGROUND

The highest rate of SSI is found in colorectal surgery. Many risk factors have been studied for their impact on SSI rates, but the impact a surgeon has on SSIs, has not been. The intent of this study is to determine what role the surgeon plays in the origin of SSI in colon surgery and whether or not compliance with guidelines increases or decreases their risk factor.

OVERVIEW

Data were collected from an SSI surveillance program over a period of more than 10 years from patients who underwent colon surgery. A questionnaire was given to surgeons in the studied hospitals whom performed more than 30 colon procedures from the surveillance and each surgeon was given an adherence score based on how their answers compared to given guidelines.

RESULTS

The overall SSI rate determined was 17.9% (428 / 2393 procedures). Four out of the 31 surgeons analyzed were found to be associated with SSI and two were found to be preventative of SSI. Two hospitals were also found to have a preventative effect on SSI. Other dependent risk factors were patient's age and sex, emergency status of procedures, length of procedures, and wound contamination class.

CONCLUSION

Surgeons can contribute to the risk or prevention of SSIs, even after adjustments are made for the hospitals with which they are affiliated and other common risk factors. Adherence to guidelines was only moderate, but was not found to have an impact on their individual risk of SSI. Further studies would be needed to confirm the factors linking surgeons to SSI risk, but it is suspected that a surgeon's skill level is a determining factor.

References 1. Hübner et al., Surgical Site Infections in Colon Surgery *Arch Surg.* 2011;146(11):1240-1245.

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