

## CAN WE AVOID COMPLICATIONS IN SURGICAL PRACTICE?

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Though complications are a genuine part of surgical practice, it can easily be avoided but lucky is the surgeon whose complications can be counted. Usually there is a season or even reasons behind the occurrence of complications rarely it comes out of blue.

Complications might be organic or even psychological. They may arise from the surgeon's side, patient's side or because of lack of the required facilities. Complications are the main source of the complaints against doctors, which naturally means the lack of patient's satisfaction. Patient's satisfaction is the cornerstone for the ideal doctor-patient relationship which probably constitutes 50% of the treatment. If the doctor is clever enough to satisfy his patient, then he can sleep well, and survive a trouble-free career.

The surgeon can avoid to a great extent the occurrence of complications, by being well backed by a theoretical background, a sound clinical practice and judgment. He should be fully aware of being guilty by the sin of omission or commission. Probably a satisfactory written consent will ameliorate the suffering if complications arise following surgery.

Strict adherence to the standard surgical rules at the time of cutting will, certainly protect the surgeon from injuring vital structures, particularly in the presence of anatomical malformations which may lead to unexpected disaster.

Missing some minor points which may be considered insignificant in the eyes of the surgeons may spoil the outcome of surgery, so every rule needs to be applied seriously irrespective of the surgeon's personal view. Personal view, if to be applied, needs to be confirmed and approved in advance by a medical committee. Changing the standard rules is not that easy particularly if it was standing the test of time.

Lack of proper care and handling in the postoperative period may raise serious complications no matter how neat and perfect the procedure was done.

Surgeon should keep himself updated and fully aware of the complications that may arise. Certainly early detection of the complications will reduce the damage and then the suffering for both the patient and the surgeon alike.

A very vital job of the surgeon is to give a clear instructions to the patient about what to do and what not to do. It is not enough to deliver the instructions but to be pretty sure



that the patient understands the instructions and moreover he is going to apply it. A clearly written instruction preferable with pictures is superior to verbal contact because the patient, like the travelers, is always confused. Nothing worse than standing several hours to perform surgery hoping to heal a lesion but the results will be spoiled by a poorly instructed patient.

The availability of modern facilities will facilitate performing surgery in the easy way and lacking of these facilities may make the journey hard & difficult and sometimes even impossible. So, it is surgeon's job prior to surgery to be sure of his background and that all tools & machines are available and functioning. It is really foolish that surgeon stops in the mid of the procedure asking about what is not ready or even not available then he is in a real puzzle; what to do and what a petty the patient is always the price payer. Prolonging the time of surgery because the unavailability of this and that may lead to serious anesthesia or surgical complications and it is solely a surgeon's responsibility.

The surgeon is not allowed to perform any procedure if he is not sure of having the experience and the required tools or machines. Therefore, it is wise and ethical to refer the patient to a specialized center rather than performing surgery if the surgeon is not sure of a satisfactory outcome because of poor technical support.

The golden rule is "two brains are much better than one". This dictates that we always have to consult senior colleagues to steal their experience and this may spare a lot of troubles and complications.

Personally I feel, it is quite possible to reduce complications in surgical practice, simply by sticking to the A, B, C, D, of medicine, stay update, consult colleagues, be honest and frank, give enough time for the patient to express his feeling and try your best to satisfy your patient in advance. By doing so, you may abolish the psychological complications. The surgeons should support and help their patients to get out of the complications rather than pushing the patient to other colleagues in a dishonest way, hoping to keep a good reputation from their patient with good results.

Finally, we have to believe that complications can be reduced to a great extent but unfortunately can never be abolished even in the best centers on this earth.