



# The Cutting Edge

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### **Weight Loss Surgery May Be Associated with Bone Loss**

Weight loss surgery may be linked to deficiencies in calcium and vitamin D and bone loss, according to a new study accepted for publication in The Endocrine Society's *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism (JCEM)*. With the growing epidemic of obesity, many people are opting for surgical procedures to help promote weight loss. While these procedures result in significant and sustained weight loss and reverse many of the complications of obesity, this new study shows there may be harmful effects on calcium and bone metabolism. (JCEM – September 23, 2008)

More at <http://newswise.com/articles/view/544557/>

### **Shorter Hours Mean Fewer Surgical Mistakes**

Surgical residents at a large teaching hospital who worked shorter shifts were less likely to make mistakes during gallbladder surgery, U.S. researchers said on Monday. The study offers some of the first evidence that rules put into place in 2003 to limit hours worked by doctors in training resulted in better care for patients. Many doctors have argued that the limits interfere with the training of doctors but make no difference in patient care. (Reuters – September 15, 2008)

More at <http://www.canada.com/reginaleaderpost/health/story.html?id=338c49e6-545a-42fe-a665-fd0967e8ca29>



### **Robot Assistant Gives Surgeons a Cutting Look**

The surgeon's eyes dart to the left, and instantly a robotic laser shifts position and gets to work on a new section of tissue. No, this is not telekinesis, but a new eye-tracking technology that could soon be giving surgeons a hand during tricky procedures. The device has been integrated into a da Vinci surgical robot - a tool that allows surgeons to perform keyhole procedures by mimicking their hand movements. However, according to a team from the Hamlyn Centre for Robotic Surgery at Imperial College London, surgeons often need more than two hands when it comes to positioning additional instruments such as endoscopes or lasers. (New Scientist – September 24, 2008)

More at [http://technology.newscientist.com/channel/tech/mg19926745.800-robot-assistant-gives-surgeons-a-cutting-look.html?feedId=online-news\\_rss20](http://technology.newscientist.com/channel/tech/mg19926745.800-robot-assistant-gives-surgeons-a-cutting-look.html?feedId=online-news_rss20)

### **Weight-Loss Surgery Pays for Itself After 2 Years, Study Shows**

Insurers recover their costs for gastric surgery within two to four years for obese patients whose weight puts their lives in danger, according to a study published today in the American Journal of Managed Care. The funds devoted to keyhole weight-loss surgery were fully recovered after 25 months, said researchers led by Pierre-Yves Cremieux from the University of Quebec in Montreal. The costs fell by \$900 a month after just 13 months compared with expenses for obese patients who didn't have the procedure.

(Bloomberg – September 8, 2008)

More at <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?sid=aGo2OYxkUfzE&pid=20601124>

### **Chest Surgeons Propose Measures For Indicating Quality Of Lung Surgery**

Even though 30,000 patients in the United States undergo lung surgery each year, no standard criteria exist to measure the quality of their care. In the current issue of The Annals of Thoracic Surgery, Mayo Clinic surgeons have proposed a system of lung surgery quality indicators for surgeons and the public as a method to demonstrate best practices for obtaining positive patient outcomes. Death rates following surgery are frequently reported. However, because they aren't adjusted for factors such as patient age and disease severity, they don't tell the whole story. To overcome this lack of risk adjustment in death rate data, the Mayo Clinic team proposed patient-centered processes that should occur prior to, during and after surgery to assure the likelihood of best surgical outcomes. (Mayo Clinic – September 15, 2008)

More at <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/09/080909205557.htm>

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