



The Cutting Edge

October 10, 2008

The Cutting Edge Newsletter (October 10, 2008)

News for the OR Professional

Published by Surgical Information Systems

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AHA Heart Surgery Study

Clinical success rates and safety are similar between surgical residents and staff surgeons performing heart surgery, according to a new long-term study reported in the Cardiovascular Surgery Supplement of Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association. In the study, surgical residents and staff surgeons performed two common heart operations – coronary artery bypass surgery (CABG) and aortic valve replacement (AVR) – or combined CABG and AVR. The study found operations performed by properly supervised residents were as safe as those performed by staff surgeons. The analysis focused on 5,703 staff surgeon-performed cases and 1,011 resident-performed cases from 1998 to 2005 involving seven staff surgeons and six residents at the Maritime Heart Center in Halifax, Canada. (American Heart Association – September 30, 2008)

More at <http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/09-30-2008/0004895021&EDATE>

Robotic Surgery Lowers Risk of Complication of Gastric Bypass

The use of a robot to assist with the most commonly performed weight-loss surgery appears to significantly lower a patient's risk of developing a rare but serious complication, according to a study published in the most recent edition of the Journal of Robotic Surgery. Minimally-invasive surgeons at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston statistically analyzed operative times, length of hospital stay and complications in 605 patients who either underwent laparoscopic Roux-en-Y gastric bypass or the same procedure with the assistance of a robot at Memorial Hermann – Texas Medical Center. The one significant



difference that stood out was the gastrointestinal leak rate. (Journal of Robotic Surgery – September 25, 2008)

More at <http://www.huliq.com/11/69237/robotic-surgery-lowers-risk-complication-gastric-bypass>

Study Finds Stroke-Prevention Surgery Safe in Growing 80-Plus Population

New research published in the October issue of Journal of the American College of Surgeons challenges the current opinion that patients in their eighties, who are often deemed "high-risk" due to their advanced age, should not undergo carotid endarterectomy – a stroke-preventing surgical procedure that clears blockages from the neck's carotid arteries. Approximately 700,000 new and recurrent strokes occur annually in the United States, and it is estimated that 10 to 20 percent of them are related to carotid artery disease. (Journal of the American College of Surgeons – October 10, 2008)

More at <http://www.physorg.com/news142848300.html>

Heart Pump Helps Children Waiting for Transplant

In a small clinical trial, a miniature heart pump that's already in use in Europe helped U.S. youngsters waiting for heart transplants. Even children at the top of the transplant waiting list can wait months before a suitable heart becomes available, and according to the current study, this small heart pump – called the Berlin Heart Excor – can help provide children a "bridge" to transplantation. Results of the study were published in the current Cardiovascular Surgery Supplement of Circulation. (HealthDay News – September 29, 2008)

More at <http://www.healthday.com/Article.asp?AID=619806>

Improving Safety When Using Bone And Soft Tissue Allograft

Each year in the United States more than 1.3 million donated bone and bone-related allografts are successfully implanted in orthopaedic patients. Musculoskeletal allografts are frequently used in orthopaedic surgery to replace bones, tendons, or other soft tissues damaged by trauma, tumors or sports related injuries. Reports of tissue recalls in recent years have raised public concerns over the safety of donated tissue, or allograft. Refinements in donor screening and heightened involvement by the FDA have improved the overall safety record of the industry, but there is room for continued and necessary improvements... (Journal of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons – October 2, 2008)

More at <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/123833.php>

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