



The Cutting Edge

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Quality Measures Improve Outcomes More Than Hospital Volume Alone

A new study by researchers at the University of California, San Francisco and Baystate Medical Center at Tufts University in Massachusetts concludes that patients facing coronary artery bypass surgery should, as a first priority, select a medical facility that has the highest adherence to quality standards. The research team sought to determine how volume among individual surgeons, volume differences between hospitals, and differences in quality of care might influence outcomes following coronary artery bypass surgery.

According to the researchers, care from high-volume centers or surgeons has been associated with better outcomes post-operatively, but how volume and quality of care were related has not been well understood. (University of California – May 21, 2009)

More at <http://www.medilexicon.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=150831>



Thyroid surgery outcomes may be worse in pregnant women

Pregnant women appear to have worse clinical and economic outcomes after thyroid and parathyroid surgery compared with women who are not pregnant, according to a report in the May issue of Archives of Surgery. Thyroid and parathyroid surgery are used to treat cancer and other conditions. The incidence of thyroid cancer has increased by almost 250 percent over the last 30 years, increasing from 3.6 to 8.7 cases per 100,000 persons, according to background information in the article. The rate is almost double in pregnant women, with 14.4 cases per 100,000 persons. (Archives of Surgery – May 18, 2009)
More at <http://www.news-medical.net/news/2009/05/18/Thyroid-surgery-outcomes-may-be-worse-in-pregnant-women.aspx>

Simulators 'make surgeons better'

Using simulators to train surgeons makes them quicker and better, a study shows. Unlike many other countries the use of simulators is not a formal part of the training process in Denmark. But the Copenhagen University Hospital team said it should be after monitoring the performance of 24 junior doctors carrying out keyhole surgery. The researchers put the obstetrics and gynecology medics in two groups - one which had the traditional training of working alongside doctors and tutoring and another which supplemented this with seven hours simulator training. They found that those that used the computer simulators were twice as quick, taking just 12 minutes to complete the operation on a patient. (BBC – May 14, 2009)
More at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/8050633.stm>

What Are The Advantages Of Minimally Invasive Surgery For Hip Replacement?

With the evolution of new surgical methods, better anesthesia techniques, and computer navigation systems, surgeons are now able to reduce recovery times after hip replacement. The effects of such methods and technologies allow the surgeon to operate with greater precision and less injury to the body. Minimally Invasive Surgery for Joint Replacement (MIS) is one surgical approach with this goal in mind. The term, however, can be misleading. In a broad sense, minimally invasive surgery for hip replacement refers to a surgical method that uses a smaller incision. (University of Missouri – May 8, 2009)
More at <http://www.medilexicon.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=149344>

Post-divorce surgery on the rise

Considering plastic surgery after your divorce? You're not alone. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, 12.1 million people had plastic surgery in 2008 alone. For many patients, a divorce or other dramatic life change was a motivating factor in their decisions to receive treatment. More than 40 percent of women in a national survey conducted by the National Women's Health Resource Center sought to improve their physical appearance after a divorce or other significant life transition. (Lansing State Journal – April 26, 2009)
More at <http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2009904260520>

GENERAL HEALTHCARE Articles

Gene Therapy Could Expand Stem Cells' Promise

Once placed into a patient's body, stem cells intended to treat or cure a disease could end up wreaking havoc simply because they are no longer under the control of the clinician. But gene therapy has the potential to solve this problem, according to a perspective article from physician-scientists at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center published in a recent issue of the journal Cell Stem Cell. The paper details strategies for genetically modifying stem cells prior to transplantation in order to ensure their safety. (New York-Presbyterian Hospital – May 21, 2009)
More at <http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/151022.php>



Obstructive Sleep Apnea, Retinopathy Linked in Diabetes

The eyes may be the window into the soul, but they may also contain important medical information. According to new research to be presented at the American Thoracic Society's 105th International Conference in San Diego on May 19, patients with diabetes who have retinopathy should also be screened for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). "We know from our earlier research that 23 percent of men with type 2 diabetes have OSA and this is under-recognized and under-treated," said Sophie D. West, M.D., of the Oxford Centre for Respiratory Medicine in the United Kingdom, who led the research. "This study suggests that OSA is linked to retinopathy in type 2 diabetes." (American Thoracic Society – May 11, 2009)
More at <http://newswise.com/articles/view/552237/>

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