

# NEVER EVENTS

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## Surgery-Related Events

### Definitions

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There are 4 never events related to surgery:

- Surgery on the wrong body part or the wrong patient, or conducting the wrong procedure
- Wrong tissue, biological implant, or blood product given to a patient
- Unintended foreign object left in a patient following a procedure
- Patient death or serious harm arising from the use of improperly sterilized instruments or equipment provided by the health care facility

Source: [Never Events for Hospital Care in Canada](#)

### Resources for Patients and Care Partners

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- Ontario Health: [Surgical Site Infections](#) quality standard and patient guide
- Centre for Perioperative Care: [Patient Information Leaflets](#)
- Healthcare Excellence Canada: [Enhanced Recovery Canada](#) (booklets and animated resources)

### Resources for Health Care Teams

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#### Clinical Guidelines, Standards, and Best Practices

##### National and Provincial

- Ontario Health: [Surgical Site Infections](#) quality standard

##### International

- American College of Surgeons: [Statement on Patient Safety in the Operating Room: Team Care](#)
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence: [Perioperative Care in Adults](#) (guideline)
- Royal College of Surgeons of England: [Good Surgical Practice](#) (surgical standard)

## Checklists, Tools, and Resources for Prevention and Management

### National

- Ontario Health:
  - [Ontario Surgical Quality Improvement Network \(ONSQIN\)](#) (tools and resources)
  - Surgical Care Safety Resources (available on request at [qualityandpatientsafety@ontariohealth.ca](mailto:qualityandpatientsafety@ontariohealth.ca))
- Alberta Health Services: [Safe Surgery Checklist](#)
- Canadian Medical Protective Association: [Surgical Safety Checklists](#)
- College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia: [Accreditation Standards: Surgical Safety Checklist](#)
- Ontario Hospital Association: [Surgical Safety Checklist Implementation Toolkit](#)

### International

- World Federation of Societies of Anaesthesiologists:  
[World Health Organization Surgical Safety Checklist](#) (tutorial)

## Other Partner Links and References

### National

- *Patient Safety in Surgery*:  
[Wrong-Site, Wrong-Procedure, and Retained Foreign Object Events in Out-of-Hospital Settings: Analysis of Closed Medico-legal Complaints in Canada \(2012–2021\)](#) (journal article)

### International

- American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons: [Surgical Site and Procedure Confirmation](#) (information statement)

Additional tools and resources are available in our [Quality and Patient Safety Community of Practice](#) and [Ontario Surgical Network Community of Practice](#) on Quorum.

To learn more about Ontario Health's Never Events Reporting program for hospitals, please visit [Never Events](#).

Need this information in an accessible format? 1-877-280-8538, TTY 1-800-855-0511, [info@OntarioHealth.ca](mailto:info@OntarioHealth.ca)

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ISBN 978-1-4868-9689-9 (PDF)

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