

How surgeons disclose medical errors to patients: a study using standardized patients.

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<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/how-surgeons-disclose-medical-errors-patients-study-using-standardized-patients>

This study evaluated the capacity of 30 academic surgeons to discuss error scenarios, such as wrong-side surgery and retained sponges, with standardized patients. Investigators analyzed the conversations and discovered that 57% of the surgeons used the word "error" or "mistake," but less than half offered a verbal apology. The authors conclude that significant gaps exist between how physicians disclose medical errors and what patients expect in such conversations, thereby generating a need for educational intervention. The same authors previously wrote a [commentary](#) calling for professional action in disclosure of medical errors.