

A qualitative content analysis of retained surgical items: learning from root cause analysis investigations.

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<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/qualitative-content-analysis-retained-surgical-items-learning-root-cause-analysis>

Based on 31 root cause analysis reports of surgical incidents in Australia, this study found that the most commonly retained surgical items were surgical packs (n=9) and drain tubes (n=8). While most retained items were detected on the day of the procedure (n=7), about 16% of items were detected 6-months or later post-procedure. The study found that complex or lengthy procedures were more likely to lead to a retained item, and many retained items, such as drains or catheters, occur in postoperative settings where [surgical counts](#) are not applicable.