

# Operating room wait time increases infection risk

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(HealthDay)—The risk of surgical site infections (SSIs) is significantly elevated with lengthier waits in the operating room prior to surgical incision, according to a study published in the July 1 issue of *Spine*.

Kris E. Radcliff , M.D., from Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, and colleagues identified 276 patients who developed SSI out of 7,991 cases that underwent [spine surgery](#) from 2005 to 2009. Risk factors for SSI were identified using multivariate analysis.

The researchers found that the mean anesthesia ready time (ART, calculated as the time after the patient was brought into the [operating room](#) prior to [surgical incision](#)) was significantly higher in patients with infection compared with those without infection (68 versus 60 minutes).

In cases with ART more than one hour versus less than one hour, the infection rate was significantly higher (4.9 versus 2.3 percent). In multivariate analysis, ART more than one hour, the number of levels, American Society of Anesthesiologists score, and posterior approach were independent [risk factors](#) for SSI. August and September had the highest percentage of cases with ART more than one hour.

"All possible steps should be taken prior to entry into the operating theater to reduce in-room time and opening of surgical sterile instrumentation be delayed until the surgery is ready to proceed," the authors write.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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