

Patient satisfaction a poor proxy after spine surgery

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In a group of patients undergoing elective spine surgery to treat degenerative conditions, patient satisfaction with care received was a poor proxy and correlated poorly with outcomes, complications, and quality of life following surgery, according to research published in the September issue of *The Spine Journal*.

(HealthDay)—In a group of patients undergoing elective spine surgery to treat degenerative conditions, patient satisfaction with care received was a poor proxy and correlated poorly with outcomes, complications, and quality of life following surgery, according to research published in the September issue of *The Spine Journal*.

Saniya S. Godil, M.D., of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., and colleagues performed a prospective, longitudinal cohort study involving 422 consecutive patients who underwent elective [spine surgery](#) over a six-month period at a single medical center to treat degenerative conditions.

The researchers note that, although patient [satisfaction](#) with [health care](#) received is important, it should not be used as a proxy for overall quality, safety, or effectiveness of surgical spine care. Specifically, [patient satisfaction](#) did not correlate with either the safety or effectiveness of the surgical care that was delivered, including three-month morbidity, readmission, improvement in quality of life, or improvement in general health.

"It appears from these and other data that satisfaction (as broadly understood) cannot be used as a surrogate for other outcome measures," the authors write. "The apparent disconnect between satisfaction and other outcome metrics, while well-recognized, reinforces the complexity of these interactions. Whether more objective outcomes that are being developed will better correlate with 'satisfaction' remains to be seen."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the medical device industry.

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