

Methodology addresses 'awakenings' under anesthesia

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(HealthDay)—New methodology can be used to examine the incidence, predisposing factors, causality, and impact of accidental awareness during general anesthesia, according to research published in the October issue of the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*.

Jaideep J. Pandit, B.M.B.Ch., D.Phil., from the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust in the United Kingdom, and colleagues describe the 5th National Audit Project, which was designed to examine the reported incidence, predisposing factors, causality, and impact of accidental awareness during general anesthesia. Data were collected from a national network of local coordinators across U.K. and Irish public hospitals. The details of reported events, anesthetic and surgical techniques, and sequelae were collected in the database.

The researchers found that accidental awareness could be categorized as the following: certain or probable; possible; during sedation; on or from the [intensive care unit](#); could not be determined; unlikely; drug errors; and statement only. For each report, the degree of evidence to support the categorization was defined. Using current tools and modifications of these tools, patient experience and sequelae were categorized.

"The 5th National Audit Project methodology may be used to assess new reports of accidental awareness during [general anesthesia](#) in a standardized manner, especially for the development of an ongoing database of case reporting," the authors write.

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