

# Good communication in the operating room prevents patient complications

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In a recent study by psychologists and surgeons concerning elective, open abdominal surgeries conducted in 167 patients, communication by the surgical team that was relevant to the procedure was linked with a reduced risk of the development of surgical site infections, whereas irrelevant communication during the closing phase of the procedure was linked with an increased risk of surgical site infections.

"Communicating about the procedure allows all members of the surgical team to be 'on the same page,' thus facilitating team coordination. Case-irrelevant communication is more likely during a routine phase of a surgery, for example wound closure," said psychologist Dr. Franziska Tschan, lead author of the *British Journal of Surgery* article.

"Case-irrelevant communication is important for a good team climate, but too much of it can be a distractor," added senior surgeon Dr. Guido Beldi. "The team has to find a balance."

**More information:** Tschan, F., Seelandt, J. C., Keller, S., Semmer, N. K., Kurmann, A., Candinas, D. and Beldi, G. (2015), Impact of case-relevant and case-irrelevant communication within the surgical team on surgical-site infection. *Br J Surg.* [DOI: 10.1002/bjs.9927](https://doi.org/10.1002/bjs.9927)

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