

# Mortality rate increases with age in emergency abdominal surgery

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(HealthDay)—Emergency major abdominal surgical procedures are associated with high mortality in older adults, with the odds of death increasing with age, according to a review published online Nov. 23 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Zara Cooper, M.D., from Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, and colleagues conducted a [systematic review](#) of retrospective and cohort studies on mortality and functional outcomes after emergency major abdominal surgery in [older adults](#). Data were included from 20 articles reporting outcomes for adults age 65 years and older.

The researchers found that in 14 of 16 studies, in-hospital and 30-day mortality exceeded 15 percent. Across study settings and procedure types, older adults undergoing emergency major abdominal surgery

consistently had higher mortality than younger individuals undergoing emergency surgery and older adults undergoing elective surgery. The odds of death increased with age in studies that stratified older adults. Postoperative functional status was not examined in any of these studies. Quantification of association by meta-analysis was not possible based on differences in exposures, outcomes, and data presented in the studies.

"Age independently predicts [mortality](#) after emergency major [abdominal surgery](#)," the authors write. "Data on changes in functional status of older adults who undergo these procedures are lacking."

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