

Depression or anxiety may increase risk of surgical wound complications

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Patients' mental health may affect their risk of experiencing wound-related complications after surgery, new research indicates.

The study included nearly 177,000 patients in England undergoing hip replacements, knee replacements, hernia repairs, and varicose vein operations. The likelihood of experiencing wound complications after a [hip replacement](#) were 1.17-times greater for patients with moderate anxiety or depression than those without. Patients with moderate anxiety or depression also had a 1.20-times greater likelihood of being readmitted for a wound complication and had longer durations of hospital stay on average. Similar results were seen across all types of operations and were larger for patients with extreme anxiety or depression.

"This relationship warrants further exploration in order to understand the mechanisms and potential opportunities for intervention," said Philip Britteon, lead author of the *British Journal of Surgery* study. "The study also emphasizes the importance of the [psychological state](#) before surgery, and the fact that psychological disorders are often overlooked. Preoperative assessment should address psychological as well as physical health, given the significant impact of anxiety/[depression](#) on wound-related complications and readmissions."

More information: P. Britteon et al. Association between psychological health and wound complications after surgery, *British Journal of Surgery* (2017). [DOI: 10.1002/bjs.10474](https://doi.org/10.1002/bjs.10474)

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