# No difference in results when surgeries are performed by US- or foreign-trained surgeons

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About 15% of surgeons practicing in the U.S. received their training at foreign medical schools. Credit: Tech. Sgt. Joseph Swafford/U.S. Air Force

A UCLA-led research team analyzed the outcomes of nearly 634,000

common surgical procedures performed in the U.S. between 2011 and 2014 and found that there were no differences in the results of those surgeries based on whether the surgeons had been trained at U.S. medical schools or medical schools outside of the U.S.

About 15 percent of surgeons practicing in the U.S. received their training at foreign medical schools. Data comparing outcomes for surgeries performed by U.S.-trained surgeons versus those of foreign-trained surgeons has been limited.

The researchers analyzed data from nearly 634,000 Medicare beneficiaries, aged 65 to 99, who underwent one of 13 common non-elective surgical procedures in emergency or trauma centers. The surgeries were performed by 37,221 surgeons.

Researchers compared mortality, complications and length of stay.

The findings provide useful information for policymakers and medical schools about the quality of care provided by U.S.- and foreign-trained surgeons. The U.S. is facing a shortage of surgeons in some specialties, and doctors who have trained outside of the U.S. often help fill those gaps.

The study was published in *Annals of Surgery*.

**More information:** Yusuke Tsugawa et al. Comparison of Patient Outcomes of Surgeons Who Are US Versus International Medical Graduates, *Annals of Surgery* (2019). DOI: 10.1097/SLA.0000000000003736

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