Reconciling the Costs of Counting Surgical Sponges

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A Look at Non-productive OR Time

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Though the primary method of prevention is the sponge count, searching for sponges to reconcile counts can result in inefficient use of OR time requiring perioperative personnel to take one to 90 minutes of additional time to reconcile incorrect/unresolved counts according to study findings reported in the Journal article, The Hidden Costs of Reconciling Surgical Sponge Counts.

In an upcoming webinar, November 17 at 4:00 pm (ET), lead author Victoria Steelman, PhD, RN, CNOR, FAAN, associate professor in the College of Nursing, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa, will present the study findings as part of The Retained Surgical Items Webinar Series funded by a grant from Medtronic through the AORN Foundation, Inc. In the webinar, Dr. Steelman will discuss evidence of the significance of retained surgical sponges, the limitations of relying on the surgical count, and the hidden costs associated with searching for missing sponges.

About AORN
AORN represents the interests of more than 160,000 perioperative nurses by providing nursing education, standards, and practice resources—including the peer-reviewed, monthly publication AORN Journal—to enable optimal outcomes for patients undergoing operative and other invasive procedures. AORN’s 40,000 registered nurse members manage, teach, and practice perioperative nursing, are enrolled in nursing education or are engaged in perioperative research. www.aorn.org

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