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WHO Surgical Safety Checklist



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This alert requires healthcare organisations in England and Wales to implement the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist (adapted for England and Wales) for every patient undergoing a surgical procedure.

Note for primary care organisations

Primary care organisations are encouraged to pragmatically assess the relevance of the core set of safety checks within the Surgical Safety Checklist to their areas of practice. If it is established that the checklist is not relevant then this should be reflected in local operational policies and procedures.

The National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA), in collaboration with a multiprofessional expert reference group, has adapted the checklist for use in England and Wales.

The alert is part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) second Global Patient Safety Challenge, 'Safe Surgery Saves Lives.'

The goal is to strengthen the commitment of clinical staff to address safety issues in the surgical setting. This includes

- Improving anaesthetic safety practices
- Ensuring correct site surgery
- Avoiding surgical site infections
- Improving communication within the team.

This alert replaces the Correct Site Surgery Alert (2005)

A study of the checklist in nearly 8,000 surgical patients, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, showed a reduction in deaths and complications of more than one third.

- [Download the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist alert \(pdf 850kb\)](#)
- [Download the WHO Surgical Safety Checklist template \(A3 size\) \(adapted for England and Wales\) \(pdf 230kb\)](#)

Supporting information

- [Download supporting information \(pdf 75kb\)](#)
- [View the press release](#)

Further information

Further information about the WHO Safe Surgery Saves Lives initiative.

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