

Compliance Today – January 2020 Preventing and detecting surgical-site infections

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According to data from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, more than 10 million inpatient surgical procedures are performed in the U.S. each year, and 2%–4% of those patients experience a post-operative surgical site infection (SSI).^[1] As the name suggests, an SSI is an infection of or near the site of an invasive procedure or involving the organ or space on which a procedure is performed.

I was staggered by a media report a while back that indicated that three times as many people die in the US annually as a result of SSIs than die from gun-related violence.^[2] The aging US population, growing rates of surgical patients who have complex comorbidities, and the prevalence of antimicrobial-resistant pathogens yield increasing costs and complications, and continue to challenge conventional methods of preventing and treating SSIs.^[3]

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