

Manitoba Health, Seniors and Active Living (MHSAL) supports reporting and learning from patient safety events. The focus of a patient safety review is to closely look at the health care system that surrounds and interacts with those giving and receiving care. The goal is to identify risks to patient safety and recommend the most effective ways to minimize risk and improve the delivery of healthcare.

Patient Safety Learning Advisory

Foreign Body Left in Client

Summary:

Prior to closing the surgical incision following a laparoscopic procedure, the surgeon noticed the cautery device was missing a plastic cover of the distal tip.

X-ray revealed a foreign body in the abdomen. Attempts were made to remove it laparoscopically and by open laparotomy, but were unsuccessful.

The wound was closed with the foreign body retained.

Keywords:

This review is based on a single event

Findings of the Review:

The Aesculap L-hook monopolar cautery tip is a limited use device that can be reprocessed up to a maximum of twenty times. It is inspected under magnification for wear, cracks and imperfections after each use.

It is unknown if repeated sterilizing and reuse fatigued the device to the point of failure.

At the time of the incident, there was no process in place to determine the number of reprocessing cycles completed on the device

The broken L-hook tip was not found within the exterior surgical field. The decision was made to perform a laparotomy to search internally.

Intra-operative radiograph images were of poor quality. The surgeon had to scrub out to view the images outside the operating room theatre.

Location of the foreign body without real time imaging was unsuccessful. The client was under general anesthetic for four hours and a decision was made to abandon the search.

Poor lighting in the operating room theatre contributed to the difficult exploration of the surgical field and unsuccessful retrieval of the foreign body.

System Learning:

Report Aesculap cautery tip defect to Heath Canada.

Install new Aesculap L-Hook electrode tips on Genesis Laparoscopic Trays

Record and date L-hook tip replacement and track the number of procedures and reprocessing cycles of the L-hook tip.

Implement a procedure to complete inspection of all devices in the Genesis Laparoscopic Trays.

Trial and purchase a quality-approved product.

Prioritize bookings for laparoscopic procedures to be in the C-Arm compatible OR theatre.

Installation of new lighting in the OR for improved visualization of work environment.

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