

**Original article:**

**Surgical Safety Checklist Popularity among the surgeons? A survey**

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**Abstract:**

**Background:** W.H.O has introduced a surgical safety checklist as part of its Safe Surgery Saves Lives initiative. The checklist's purpose was to reduce surgical complications that resulted from inadequate safety practices and promote greater communication among surgery teams. It is made necessary to use the surgical safety checklist in the operation theatres across the world but is it really used in the actual practical setup? **Material & Methods:** With that idea in mind we had conducted a study to know about the awareness and practical use of surgical safety checklist among surgeons attending Haryana Chapter of Association of Surgeons in India Conference (HASICON) 2014 in their surgical practice. Printed performa with a set of questions was given to the delegates and the result was analysed. **Result:** Only 57% of the study group had heard about the safety checklist and only 32% of them are using it in their surgical practice.

**Conclusion:** There is an urgent need to spread awareness about the safety checklist and one way of achieving it is by demonstration papers in conferences across the world.

**Keywords:** Checklist; Safe surgery; Safety culture

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**Introduction:**

Surgical care is an integral part of health care throughout the world, with an estimated 234 million operations performed annually. It can prevent loss of life but can be associated with considerable risk of complications and death. In industrialized countries a perioperative rate of death from inpatient surgery range from 0.4 to 0.8 % and rate of major complication from 3 to 17%. Data suggest that at least half of all surgical complications are avoidable. Thus surgical care and its attendant complications represent a substantial burden of disease worthy of attention<sup>1</sup>. In 2007 the W.H.O introduced a surgical safety checklist as part of its Safe Surgery Saves Lives initiative. The checklist's purpose was to reduce surgical complications that resulted from inadequate safety practices and promote greater communication

among surgery teams. The use of surgical safety checklist showed reduction in complications from 11 to 7 % and total in hospital death rate from 1.5 to 0.8%.<sup>2</sup> W.H.O had made it necessary to use the surgical safety checklist in the operation theatres but is it really used in the actual practical setup? With that idea in mind we had conducted a study to know about the awareness and practical use of surgical safety checklist among surgeons attending Haryana Chapter of Association of Surgeons in India Conference (HASICON) 2014 in their surgical practice. Our aim was to create awareness about the topic among the surgeons attending the event.

**Material and Methods:**

**Inclusion Criteria:**

1. All delegates attending the conference HASICON 2014 were included in the study group.

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## Awareness of W.H.O safety checklist among the delegates attending H.A.S.I.C.Q.N 2014

• Personal Information

1) Name (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ 2) Age/Sex \_\_\_\_\_ 3) Working Place \_\_\_\_\_  
 Med. Col. / Dis. Hos/ P.H.C/ Pri. Hos./ Others

4) Present Designation \_\_\_\_\_ 5) Surgical experience \_\_\_\_\_ 6) Contact \_\_\_\_\_  
 JR / PG/ SR /A.P/ Assoc./ Prof. / Jr. Cons. / Sr. Cons.    <5yr    5-10    >10    Mobile    e-MAIL

• Are you aware of the W.H.O safety checklist?  
 Yes     No

i) If Yes source of your information?  
 1) Conference/C.M.E    2) PG Presentation    3) Journal    4) Colleague    5) Others

ii) Level of information?  
 a) When W.H.O launched the program?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 b) Which hospital was selected in India for study?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 c) What was the outcome of the study?  
 Morbidity decrease    <30%    30-50%    50-70%    >70%  
 Mortality decrease    <30%    30-50%    50-70%    >70%

• Are you using surgical safety checklist in your routine practice?  
 Yes     No

• Type of use?  
 1) Strict    2) Casual    3) Occasional    4) No use

• Kindly mention your own result in respect to use of surgical safety checklist?  
 1) Excellent    2) Good    3) Satisfactory    4) Burden

• Those who are not aware of checklist or don't use it want to get information or start using it?  
 Yes     No

• If No, do you want that the doctor whom u are getting treatment from should be using surgical safety checklist?  
 Yes     No

• Are you aware that not using surgical safety checklist has got medico legal implication?  
 Yes     No

• Do you feel that such exercise should be mandatory in health practice?  
 Yes     No

Figure1 showing the printed performa with questionnaire given to the delegates attending HASICON 2014

**Exclusion Criteria:**

1. Delegates those were not willing for participation was excluded.

The study was conducted during the conference HASICON 2014. Printed performas were distributed to all the delegates after acquiring consent from the delegates to participate. The performa contained set of questions pertaining to the surgical safety checklist which the delegates had to answer. Those delegates

refusing to participate were excluded. The sample performas is given in figure 1. All the performas were collected and analysis was conducted. After the collection and analysis of the performason the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the conference an audiovisual presentation was made discussing the results of the questionnaire and creating awareness about the surgical safety checklist and a copy of W.H.O surgical safety checklist was given to all delegates figure2.



Figure2 W.H.O surgical safety checklist

**Results:**

A total of 165 delegates attended the conference out of which 142 (86%) were included & 23 (14%) delegates refused to participate figure 3. 81 (57%) out of 142 were aware about the surgical safety checklist while 61 (43%) had not heard of it figure 4. Even the delegates who were aware couldn't answer the questions given in the performa with only a single delegate able to answer all the questions giving the impression that those who were aware of the checklist only heard of it. 115 (81%) of 142 delegates wanted to know about the checklist how it works again emphasizing the lack of knowledge and use of the particular topic among the delegates. 97(68%) of the 142 delegates were found to be not

using the surgical checklist in their practice mostly including surgeons who have not heard much about the topic figure 5. A final question was asked should the doctor you getting operated by be using checklist. Survey relieved as many as 111 (78%) of 142 delegates giving answer as yes showing the belief in the fact that this tool can decrease avoidable errors .

**Discussion:**

W.H.O introduced a surgical safety checklist as part of its Safe Surgery Saves Lives initiative. The checklist's purpose was to reduce surgical complications that resulted from inadequate safety practices and promote greater communication among surgery teams. The use of surgical safety checklist showed reduction in complications from 11 to 7 %

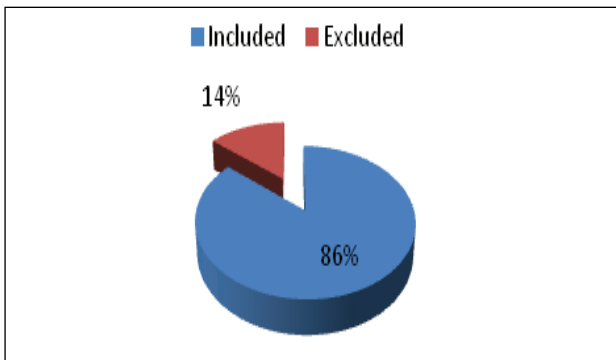


Figure: 3, Delegates included in the study

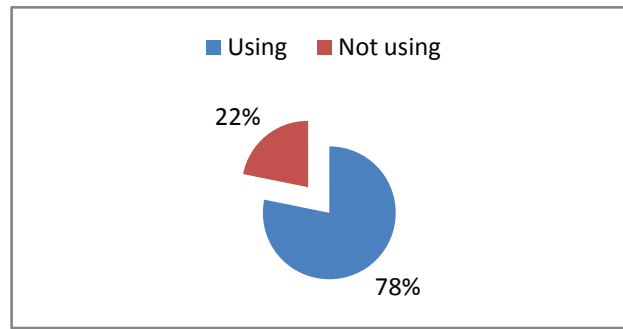


Figure:6, Doctor u are getting treated with should be using the checklist

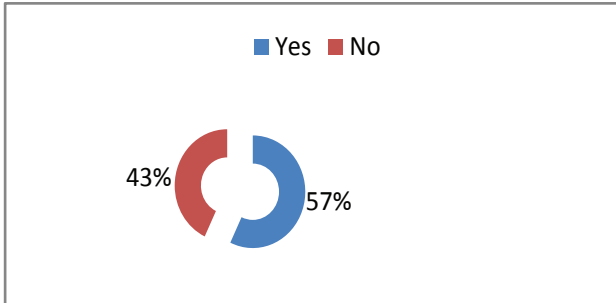


Figure: 4, Awareness about surgical safety checklist

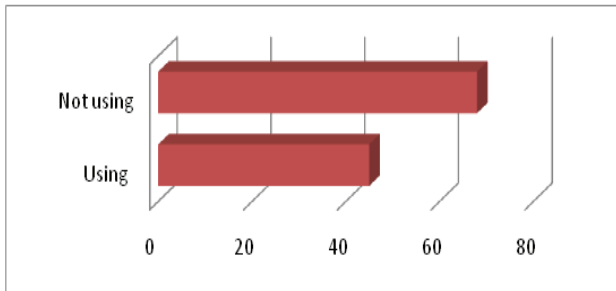


Figure: 5, Using surgical safety checklist in health practice

and total in hospital death rate from 1.5 to 0.8%.<sup>2</sup> Use of safety checklist involves both changes in systems and changes in the behaviour of the individual surgical teams.<sup>1</sup> Use of the W.H.O surgical safety checklist has been associated with a significant reduction in major postoperative complications after surgery.<sup>3,4,5,6,7,8</sup> In our study we had tried to analyse the awareness status about the safety checklist in our region. Unfortunately the majority of the surgeons in our study were found not to be aware properly about the checklist and are currently not using the checklist in their practice. We have tried to make them aware of it via an audiovisual presentation in the conference. Further such studies should be conducted to evaluate the scenario in other regions as well.

**Conclusion:**

The study clearly depicts the need to increase awareness of this safety initiative. The level of knowledge among the surgeons needs to be strengthened for the sake of patient’s safety. One way of achieving it is by giving live demonstration lectures at various conferences an initiative like that started by us.

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