

THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS

News

ID chips keep sponges out of patients

New York, July 18 Radiofrequency ID (RFID) chips, similar to those implanted in products to deter theft, may help prevent sponges and other materials from being left in a patient during surgery, the findings from a study suggests.

Still, further research is needed to determine whether placement of these chips in surgical sponges and other operating room materials will be cost effective for a problem that occurs once in every 10,000 procedures.

At most hospitals, the operating room staff counts the number of sponges before the operation starts and then counts them again at the conclusion to make sure none are been left inside the patient.

On average, it takes just 3 seconds for the wand to pick up the presence of an RFID-tagged sponge. While surgeons and nurses indicated that the RFID system was easy to use, the real challenge would be incorporating the new device into the workflow of the operating room, said leading author Dr Alex Macario.

—Reuters

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