

When surgical tools get left behind



A man sets off a metal detector at an airport security check. He removes keys, coins and all metallic objects from his pockets, but sets off the alarm a second time. What he hadn't realised was that surgical scissors had been left in his abdomen from an operation he had weeks before.

Medical teams perform miracles every day – but mistakes do happen. When things go wrong in surgery lives can be ruined and reputations shattered.

The Operating Room (OR) is a busy and difficult environment to work in and distractions are frequent. Time pressure, team pressure, and the fact that every operation is different contributes to human error.

Meet the patients who were the unlucky recipients of unwanted gifts. When Don was slow to recover from abdominal surgery and experienced pains in his chest every time he bent over, an x-ray was ordered. The findings were shocking. A 13 inch stainless steel retractor had been left inside him from a recent surgery. Candy had a biopsy taken from her breast to test for cancer and while the results were negative, Candy's troubles were just beginning.

Meet the doctor who has been investigating surgeries where tools have been left behind. He believes he has the answer and if his trial operation goes according to plan, it might just revolutionise ORs around the world.

Produced by Beyond Productions



Don had a thirteen-inch stainless steel retractor inside him.



In the operating theatre.



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