

FAILURE TEACHES SUCCESS

"Foolish who learns from his mistakes, he should learn from the mistakes of others"

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Mistakes are common problems of our daily practice. Sadly, we face them in all aspects of life, and at all levels. Mistakes may lead to insignificant harm, but still they should be counted as mistakes. Nonetheless, they could lead to serious problems, causing death or even reach the level of a surgical crime.

In surgical practice, mistakes can never be accepted, particularly if they are done several times by the same surgeon. The price payer of the surgeons' mistakes is the miserable patient. This is totally unethical. I have seen some colleagues who keep doing the same procedure several times even after repeated failure. Moreover, they did not think of changing it and finding a better alternative. I think they should be out of the surgical practice.

Here, the question arises, why do mistakes happen? Is it impossible to avoid mistakes, i.e. are they unavoidable? Bad results of treatment may be related to the disease itself as in progressive diseases with no hope for cure, or related to the patient because he is not obedient and not listening to the physician instructions. They could also be related to lack of proper facilities, which makes the cure almost difficult. In all these situations, we can say the surgeon might be blameless. What is really painful is when the surgeon is guilty by the sin of omission or commission.

I have to say, lucky is the one whose mistakes can be counted. So I admit, mistakes in surgical practice is a reality. We have to pray for "Allah" to forgive us for them. Much more important than the occurrence of mistakes, is the analysis of these mistakes, why they happen, and what are the reasons behind them? By realizing the reasons responsible for these mistakes, we can avoid repeating them. It is a shame and a crime to keep repeating the same mistake and the patients will pay the price unnecessarily.



To avoid falling in the same trap again, and to win the battle happily, we must ruminate what happens. We, also, have to revise the experience of colleagues in the same career; those who consult never fail. A good idea is to go back to our surgical books, to see where we are. Proper follow up of the patient always teaches good lessons.

It is wise to tailor our practice to our experience and to the capability of solving that particular pathology. It is fair enough to refer the problem which is beyond our experience to more experienced colleagues.

Probably, one of the reasons behind failure and doing mistakes is the presence of a variety of treatment lines for a particular pathology. So, we have to choose the best line that suits a particular patient, and not only a particular pathology. In other words, we have to tailor the line of treatment according to the general condition of the patient and then the local pathology. Hitting the target is not always an easy job. We have to master this fine art, which comes by experience and experience is often painful. The young may be clever but he is not wise. Wisdom is not inborn within an individual; it comes only by experience, and there is no substitute for the experience.

Finally, and as cited above, to avoid falling in the same trap again, we have to analyze the reasons behind failure, so that we guard against mistakes and never go back again on the same pathway. Failure are the pillar for reaching success in surgical practice, and good decision should be the outcome of a bad experience.

