

Surgical Stasis: Anomalies & Scarcities in Surgical Residents Training in the Covid-19 Period

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Abstract

Introduction: The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a marked decrease in surgical procedures performed worldwide and to numerous other changes in medical practice. We investigated the effect of these changes on surgical trainees.

Method: We searched medical records and asked a total of 67 surgical residents from different specialities (general surgery, obstetrics-gynecology, orthopedics-traumatology, neurosurgery) to answer a questionnaire investigating how the total number of surgical procedures and operative role varied for each respondent during the pandemic, the number of medical congresses and hands-on courses they attended during this time, how much study time was available to them and how the changes in their training modules affected them.

Results: Most respondents reported a marked decrease in the number of surgical procedures performed, performing key operative steps with a lower frequency. Most of them believed that their training stagnated or suffered a setback. However, most residents consider the changes in their training during the pandemic a useful experience.

Conclusions: The real effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on surgical training should be further studied. Future prospective studies should identify threshold values for each surgical procedure and the most effective compensatory strategies.

Key words: COVID-19, surgical resident, surgical training