

The use and care of quivers in the surgical setting – laparoscopic surgery

To eliminate the risk of generating an electrical burn to the patient through the inadvertent activation of an electrosurgical device intra operatively, the following approaches are recommended: -

- The risks of housing electrosurgical devices and laparoscopic instrumentation together in one quiver should be discussed and acknowledged by all members of the surgical team.
- Where both an electrosurgical device and laparoscopic instrumentation are required to be located within easy access for surgeon use, separate quivers or compartments should be provided.
- The instrument (scrub) nurse must carefully monitor the placement of each instrument following use, to ensure separate housing of each.

The Australian College of Operating Room Nurses Standard 2008 (Electrosurgical Equipment Standard 5) provides guidance for the use of electrosurgical equipment with the following Standard Statements:

- All personnel shall be aware of the risks associated with use of electrosurgical equipment
- An education program shall be established for the instruction of medical and personnel involved in the application and use of electrosurgical equipment
- Equipment shall be routinely checked before use and undergo planned preventative maintenance
- Use of electrosurgical equipment shall be documented

Each Standard Statement heads further detailed advisory points for the use of electrosurgical equipment.

References:

Standards Australia, New Zealand Standards AS/NZS 2500:2004 Guide to the safe use of electricity in patient care 4th edition Sydney: Standards Australian 2004. <http://www.saiglobal.com/PDFTemp/Previews/OSH/as/as2000/2500/2500-2004.pdf>

The Australian College of Operating Room Nurses Standards 2008.

Valleylab. Principles of electrosurgery [Online]. Boulder: Valleylab Inc; 2005. Available at: <http://www.valleylab.com/education/poes/index.html>

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