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## Manufacturer Guarantees Surgical Sponge-Scanning System

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According to an article in [Outpatient Surgery](#), every day, operating room (OR) teams nationwide leave almost a dozen surgical sponges inside their patients. To improve patient safety, Stryker implemented its “SurgiCount Safety-Sponge System” to keep track of surgical sponges. Reducing or eliminating the number of surgical sponges left behind reduces the risk of infection and permanent injury, the need for additional surgery, and even patient fatalities. Healthcare providers are hopeful to realize cost savings arising from legal expenses, malpractice settlements and awards, and non-reimbursable patient care.

Now, in a risk-sharing and indemnification program, the [SurgiCount Promise](#), Stryker has agreed to stake up to \$5 million in legal costs for any provider whose patient suffers a retained sponge during surgeries in which the sponge-scanning system was properly used. In addition to the product liability protection, Stryker will also refund SurgiCount customers the cost of implementing the system in the event of its failure.

According to Stryker, retained sponges are the most commonly reported surgical adverse event. And, the [SurgiCount system](#) is clinically proven to eliminate those errors. The system is currently in use in almost 500 hospitals nationwide; in an estimated 10 million procedures, the system has never failed to identify a retained sponge. The system utilizes individual bar-code identification of each sponge and towel, a mobile, easy-to-read, real-time scanner and documentation of verified correct counts in its system management software. Together the components help eliminate retained surgical sponges by providing more accurate, real-time counts in the operating room, and auditable, post-operative documentation.

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