Antimicrobial sutures can prevent surgical site infections and save money

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New analyses of the published clinical studies indicate that antimicrobial sutures are effective for preventing surgical site infections (SSIs), and they can result in significant cost savings. The results are published in the *British Journal of Surgery*.

In one analysis that included 21 randomized clinical trials, investigators found a risk of 138 surgical site infections per 1000 procedures, and the use of sutures coated with the antimicrobial triclosan reduced this by 39. Investigators noted that sufficient evidence exists for a 15 percent relative risk reduction in SSIs when triclosan-coated sutures are used.

In an economic analysis of results from 34 studies, triclosan sutures were linked with an average cost savings per surgical procedure of £91.25 across all wound classes when compared with non-antimicrobial-coated sutures. "Antimicrobial sutures ought to be included into SSI care bundles and provide a further significant saving to National Health Service (England) surgical practice," said Prof. David Leaper, lead author of the economic analysis.

The papers are part of a *British Journal of Surgery* special issue on surgical infection.

More information: S. W. de Jonge et al, Meta-analysis and trial sequential analysis of triclosan-coated sutures for the prevention of surgical-site infection, *British Journal of Surgery* (2017). DOI: 10.1002/bjs.10445