



# Patient-161

**Patient-161 had a severe headache and could not see. She was taken to Sunrise Hospital by ambulance. They left her sitting in the waiting room. They eventually examined her and said she needed brain surgery. After two surgeries, the patient was put on life support. Her family took her to a hospital in California where an MRI showed metal inside her head. The surgeon discovered that Sunrise Hospital had left a piece of scalpel inside her head. The patient died.**

Patient-161 had a severe headache and could not see and was taken to Sunrise Hospital by ambulance.

**She told the staff that she had severe pain in her head and said she could not see, but they left her sitting in the waiting room.**

**They eventually examined her and said she needed brain surgery. After surgery, the patient was put on life support.**

The doctor said the patient was on life support because they did an emergency surgery and found out she has a cyst or tumor. He also said they can try another surgery in the morning.

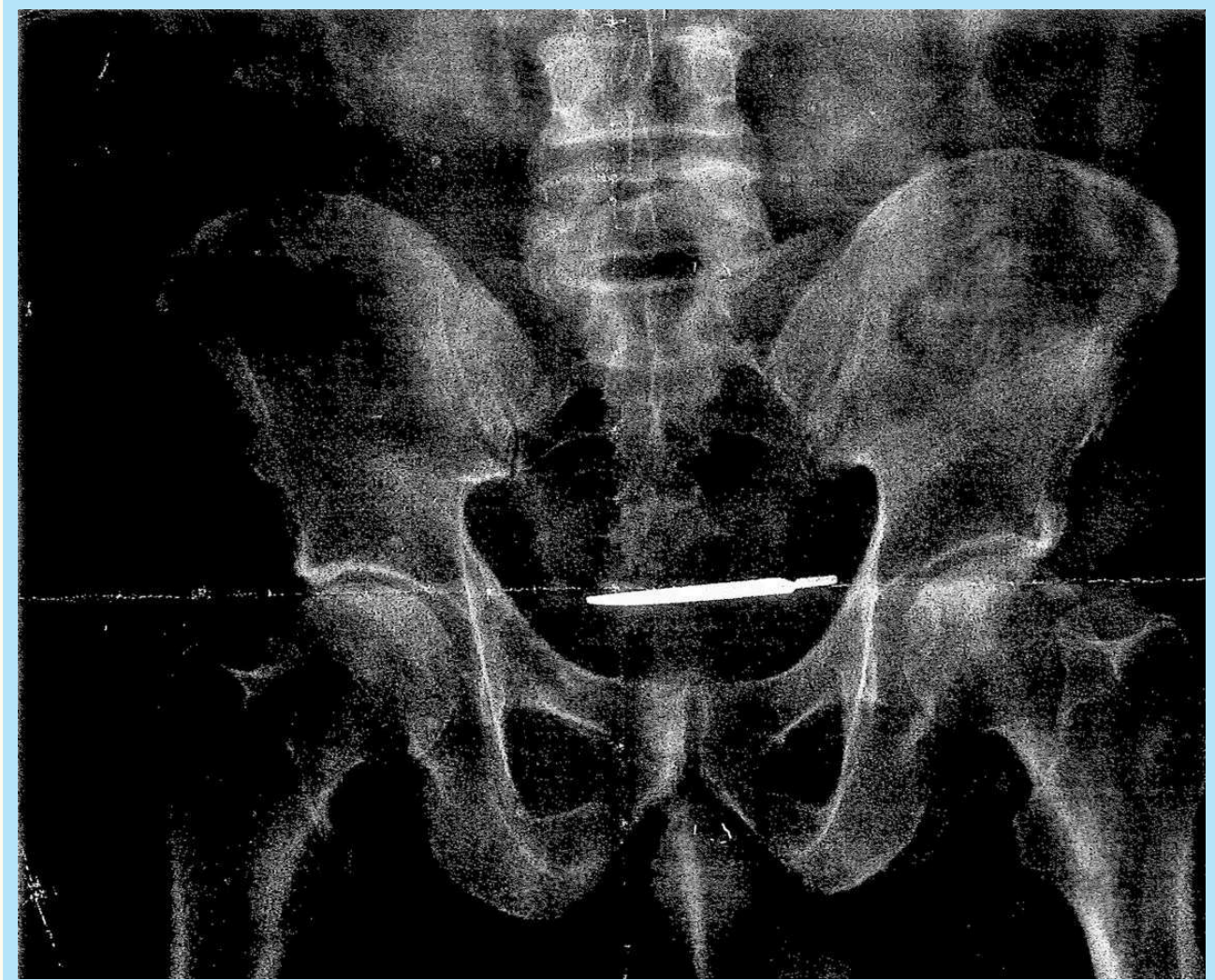
The next morning, after the 2nd surgery, they told the patient's family that she would not survive. And, if she does, her motor skills will not be the same.

The doctor also said the tumor is so rare, and they can't and won't be treating it. He was so sure the patient would not survive.

At that point, the family took the patient to a hospital in California. They started treatment and did an MRI which indicated there was metal inside her head. They were trying to figure out why the MRI was showing metal.

The doctor (at the hospital in California) agreed to do the surgery. He came out after the surgery and was furious because of what he found. He told the family that Sunrise Hospital had left a piece of scalpel inside her head.

The patient's condition became worse, and she died.



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This is a stock photo of a sign showing a scalpel that was left inside a patient's body.

## Retained Surgical Items

**According to an investigation, surgical items are mistakenly left inside patients at least once a day in an average year. This should NOT happen.**

When surgical items are mistakenly left inside a patient, they are referred to as "retained surgical items."

According to an investigation by Hearst Newspapers, a patient finishes surgery with an object unintentionally left inside their body at least once a day in an average year.

Surgeons inadvertently forget sponges, wires, needles, drill bits, instruments, broken tool fragments and other surgical materials inside patients. Some are quickly removed without lasting harm, while others linger causing infection, pain, further surgeries and even death.

Read the April 3, 2025, [article](#).

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