



How Information and Consent Help to Manage Complication

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Consent

- Enough time should be allocated for detailed consent.
- Care for privacy.
- A witness should be also be conserved to elucidate possible long term consequences.
- If possible, additional document like brochures should better be used.

Who should take consent?

The person obtaining consent must;

- Be capable of performing the procedure themselves

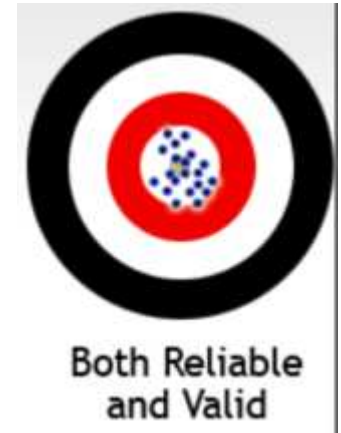
OR

- Have received specialist training in advising patients about the procedure.



UK Department of Health guidelines
Anderson OA, 2007

Validity



For consent to be valid;

- The patient must be competent to take the particular decision
- The patient must have received sufficient
- information to make a decision
- The patient must not be acting under stress.

Timing

- It is wiser to obtain informed consent at the time when the risks and benefits are often explained.
- Be sure the patient understand the content !!
- Not on the operation day, under stress!!



Content

Sufficient information to make a decision but ALSO;

- The risks and benefits involved
- Any alternative treatments
- The risks and benefits of doing nothing.



Department of Health (UK) advises that a doctor;

- Should warn the patient of anything that poses a substantial risk of grave adverse consequences
- Should mention significant risk that would affect the decision of a reasonable patient
- Is under a clear and legal obligation to tell the truth if asked a direct question.

Which risks should be mentioned?

- In practice, a complication that is likely to occur more than 1% of the time is often mentioned
- Critical knowledge about more rare complications should also be mentioned such as;



Permanent loss of vision after cataract surgery which is quite rare (4/1000) but critically affects the patients life.

Do Not Forget that;



Too little information fails to inform, while too much information may lead to confusion.

Success vs Risks

Besides the risks;

- Potential benefits should also be mentioned
- Frequency of success vs frequency of risks !!

Alternative options
should be mentioned
highlighting the pros
and cons.



If the surgery is not performed?

- The long term possibility of spontaneous resolution or worsening of the condition and the way surgery may influence this is worth highlighting



CONSENT



- Opportunity for guidance to make the decision
- Dispel unrealistic expectations related to surgery
- Chance to create an open and trustful relationship between Doctor and Patient

**SO MAY HELP IN CASE OF OPERATIVE
COMPLICATIONS ARE ENCOUNTERED.**

CONSENT

- Good patient education during consent process is the surgeons chance to create a relationship with the patient and make sure that the patient's expectations are realistic.



In Summary;

- Qualified consent by a qualified healthcare professional
- Take for the particular procedure and appropriate form
- Take before the operation day
- Explain;
 - Procedure
 - Risks but also benefits
 - Alternative treatments
 - Risks and benefits of delaying
 - Avoid medical language
 - Do not rush for decision