New Technology Keeps Patients Safer After Surgery

(NAPSA)—If you or someone you care about is among the over 10 million Americans who will have surgery this year, there may be good news for you. New medical technology that many hospitals are implementing can improve the quality of care you receive after surgery—while decreasing hospital costs. A recent clinical study on this new technology, published in Anesthesiology, found that using the system to continuously monitor the oxygen and heart rate levels of patients until they were discharged—sending wireless pages to clinicians when there were signs of trouble—led to 65 percent fewer rescue events and 48 percent fewer ICU transfers, freeing up 135 ICU days for other patients in need.

Dr. John Abenstein at the Mayo Clinic said the study results "have important implications for hospital wards throughout the country." The current standard of care for hospital inpatients calls for the sampling of intermittent vital signs every two to four hours and one clinical examination at each eight- to 12-hour shift. However, according to Dr. Abenstein, this practice is "an ineffective way to monitor patients and prevent adverse outcomes, as repeated events demonstrate."

"This represents a new approach to detect unrecognized postoperative deterioration—a significant precursor in morbidity for in-hospital patients," stated the lead researcher and author of the study, Andreas H. Taenzer, M.D., at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center. "Our study results strongly demonstrate that continuous patient surveillance with Masimo Patient SafetyNet™ can greatly improve outcomes."

A new, intelligent bedside monitoring system is helping hospitals watch over their patients better, saving lives and cutting costs.

Medicare records show that failure to rescue and respiratory failure are two of the top three medical errors with the highest incident rates—accounting for 26 percent of reported deaths and billions of dollars in excess costs. Although the safest way to monitor and treat a patient is around-the-clock, one-on-one care by a trained clinician, the cost is prohibitive. Today, thanks to this new monitoring technology, a simple $10 finger sensor and a wireless pager worn by nurses can help hospitals keep their patients much safer.

The new system, known as Masimo Patient SafetyNet, provides an unmatched level of patient safety and new hope that advanced medical technology and intelligent monitoring solutions can make a remarkable difference.

The technology works by alerting clinicians to any abnormalities in heart rate or the amount of oxygen in the blood, which are measured noninvasively and continuously. This can help doctors and nurses tell much earlier when there is a problem and is expected to save more lives, improve patient care, and dramatically reduce the cost of care. The system can also be configured for even more advanced monitoring, such as measuring whether a patient is breathing, has low hemoglobin level (anemia) or needs fluid.

Dr. Abenstein believes the study provides "a glimpse of the future," where such systems "allow us to improve the quality of care for our patients."

You can ask your doctor whether the hospital with which he or she is affiliated has Masimo Patient SafetyNet. Learn more at www.masimo.com/generalFloor/index.htm.