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Surgery

POSTOPERATIVE DEATH RATES One important byproduct of the National Halothane Study was the finding of large differences in postoperative mortality in the participating institutions. Death rates for the six-week period following surgery varied widely among the 34 institutions. These death rates ranged from 0.27 per cent to 6.40 per cent, a 24-fold ratio. In six institutions the death rate was below 1.0 per cent; in ten it was above 3 per cent. Such variation is so important an outcome of surgery compels attention. (*Moses, L. E., and Mosteller, F.: Institutional Differences in Postoperative Death Rates: Commentary on Some of the Findings of the National Halothane Study, J.A.M.A. 203: 492 (Feb.) 1968.*)