

African-Americans have worse cervical spine surgery outcomes

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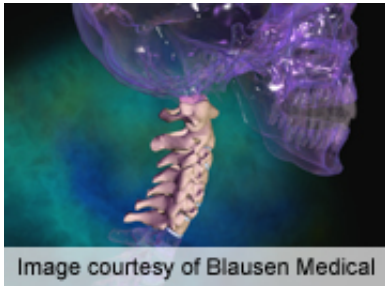


Image courtesy of Blausen Medical

(HealthDay)—African-American patients have significantly higher rates of in-hospital complications and mortality associated with cervical spine surgery than Caucasian patients, according to a study published in the Aug. 15 issue of *Spine*.

Richard L. Skolasky, Sc.D., from Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and colleagues analyzed data from the Nationwide Inpatient Sample to estimate racial and ethnic differences in in-hospital complication and [mortality rates](#) after cervical spine surgery. Data were included for 983,420 adult nontrauma hospital discharges from cervical spine surgery from 2000 through 2009.

The researchers found that the overall rate of an in-hospital complication was 4.09 percent, and the overall mortality rate was 0.42 percent. Rates of in-hospital complications or mortality did not differ between Hispanics and Caucasians. However, African-Americans had elevated odds of experiencing an in-hospital complication (odds ratio, 1.37) and of dying during hospitalization (odds ratio, 1.59), compared with Caucasians.

"Although there were no differences between Caucasians and Hispanics, African-Americans had significantly higher rates of in-hospital complications and mortality associated with

cervical spine surgery than did Caucasians," the authors write. "These differences persisted after adjusting for known risk factors for [complications](#) and mortality."

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