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Greening the operating room

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ABSTRACT

Background

Climate change will affect most populations in the next decades and put the health of billions of people at risk. Health care facilities represent a significant source of pollution around the world and contribute to environmental changes. To address this topic, we performed a review of the available literature on tactics to reduce operating room (OR) waste and the potential of these strategies to impact the environment.

Data Sources

A literature search was performed querying PubMed, Web of Science, and Science Direct. No comparative data were found; most were opinion papers, white papers, and case studies. For this reason, we proceeded with a narrative review, which provides an overview of the evidence on this topic and identifies areas for future research.

Results

This systematic review summarizes the available literature on the 5 “Rs” of waste management: reduction, reusing, recycling, rethinking, and renewable energies.

Conclusions

Surgery has a unique opportunity to transition to more environmentally-friendly operating room strategies, which may help decrease waste and lessen the impact of climate change.

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