

Accepted Manuscript

Informed consent—It's more than a signature on a piece of paper

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PII: S0002-9610(17)30720-1

DOI: [10.1016/j.amjsurg.2017.09.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amjsurg.2017.09.015)

Reference: AJS 12536

To appear in: *The American Journal of Surgery*

Received Date: 19 April 2017

Revised Date: 0002-9610 February 0002-9610

Accepted Date: 18 September 2017

Please cite this article as: Cocanour CS, Informed consent—It's more than a signature on a piece of paper, *The American Journal of Surgery* (2017), doi: 10.1016/j.amjsurg.2017.09.015.

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Abstract:

Informed consent is an ethical concept that is codified in the law and is in daily practice at every health care institution. Three fundamental criteria are needed for clinical informed consent: the patient must be competent, adequately informed and not coerced. Physician-patient interaction is rooted in the ethical concept of beneficence, but over the 19th and 20th centuries, case law and societal changes brought respect for autonomy and with it--informed consent. This article briefly reviews the basics of informed consent, when is it required, how did informed consent evolve into what it is today and what can the surgeon do to truly achieve informed consent.

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