

[IMAGE]

Do Hospitals Take More Lives Than They Save?

By Editorial Staff

When you're suffering from any type of acute illness or traumatic injury, receiving treatment for a severe, chronic condition, or even experiencing the joy of childbirth, where do you usually go? The hospital, of course, where helping hands with a wealth of tools at their disposal stand ready to help. But wait: What if your hospital visit not only didn't improve your condition, but actually made it worse – *terminally* worse?

Back in 1999, the Institute of Medicine published its groundbreaking report, *To Err Is Human*, estimating that as many as 98,000 people die annually from preventable hospital errors. Well, welcome to 2014 and a study published recently in the *Journal of Patient Safety*. According to the study, the low estimate of annual preventable deaths that occur in hospitals nationwide is 210,000; the high estimate nearly doubles that figure to 400,000 deaths.

hospital patient - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark Besides pointing out the need for reform and review to ensure patients get better, not worse, when treated at hospitals, these findings emphasize the value of preventive, conservative care that, at least in certain cases / situations, may reduce or altogether eliminate the need for hospital care – and its attendant risks – in the first place. After all, if you never develop heart disease or diabetes, you'll likely never require a hospital procedure for either condition – a procedure that could go wrong, causing potentially deadly consequences.

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