

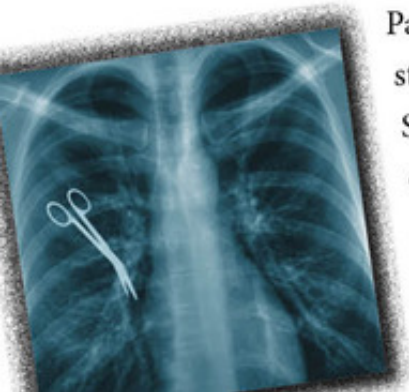
chapter four

Surgery Fail

Surgeons are special doctors. They perform operations. They make people better. One failed.

Erica Parks is an Air Force officer. In 2010, she had a baby. She had an operation. Her surgeon left a **sponge** in her body. Sponges are thin squares. They're cotton bandages. They soak up blood.

Parks was in pain for several weeks. Her stomach swelled up. Her gut shut down. She needed another operation. The operation lasted 6 hours. She stayed in



Items left in bodies cause infections.

the hospital for 3 weeks. This condition is called “**retained** surgical item.” Retained means stuck. It happens about 12 times a day.