

Chapter 30

Errors

- 1 I have mistaken, but I have been mistaken less than other surgeons.
Guillaume Dupuytren, 1777-1835
- 2 I have made many mistakes myself ... the best surgeon, like the best general, is he who makes the fewest mistakes.
Astley Paston Cooper, 1768-1841
- 3 From the time of Hippocrates surgery has ever been the salvation of inner medicine. In inner medicine physicians have dwelt too much on dogmas, opinions and speculations; and too often their errors passed undiscovered to the grave. The surgeon, for his good, has had a sharper training; his errors hit him promptly in the face.
Thomas Clifford Allbutt, 1836-1925
- 4 What we call experience is often a dreadful list of ghastly mistakes.
J Chalmers Da Costa, 1863-1933

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mistakes myself
.... the best
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fewest mistakes.*

**Astley Paston Cooper,
1768-1841**

5 More mistakes are made from want of a proper examination than for any other reason.

Russell John Howard, 1875-1942

6 A few observations and much reasoning leads to error; many observations and a little reasoning to truth.

Alexis Carrel, 1873-1944

7 The pilot is by circumstances allowed only one serious mistake, while the surgeon may commit many and not even recognize his own errors as such.

John S Lockwood, 1907-1950

8 To a patient after removing her breast (without a biopsy) for a benign lesion: "madam, I have made the most awful mistake, I've never before done such a thing in my whole life, I don't know how you can ever forgive me".

John Homans, 1877-1954

9 In the art of surgery, error is more likely to occur than in almost any other line of human endeavor.

Max Thorek, 1880-1960

10 While it is human to err, it is inhuman not to try, if possible, to protect those who entrust their lives into our hands from avoidable failures and danger.

Max Thorek, 1880-1960

11 The two unforgivable sins of surgery. The first great error in surgery is to operate unnecessarily; the second, to undertake an operation for which the surgeon is not sufficiently skilled technically.

Max Thorek, 1880-1960

12 You want a surgical team that faces each error, each mishap, straight up, names it, and takes steps to prevent its recurrence.

Francis D Moore, 1913-2001

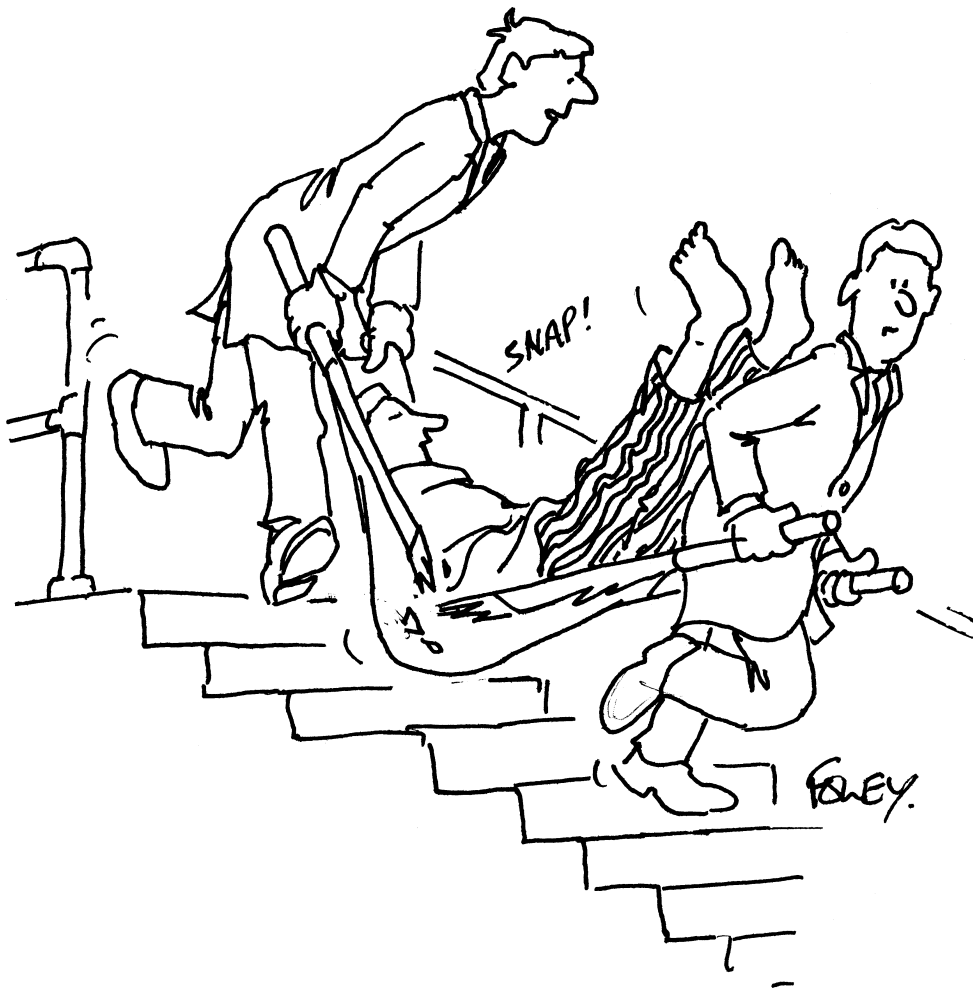
13 Human error complicated by organisational factors is the main cause of accidents.

PO Nyström

14 It is usually the second mistake in response to the first mistake that does the patient in.

Clifton K Meador

15 In any given operation the source of error will never be determined if more than one person is involved.



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