

“It’s not a science” - Pros and Cons of Surgery

As you look into options for your back pain/spinal stenosis, you may want to read from medical experts on the pros and cons of surgery. *Complications* is a book written by a well-established medical/surgical specialist who is not a medical renegade nor a primadonna surgeon who views surgery as the only solution to all things health.

Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science

Atul Gawande (Author)

In vivid accounts of true cases, surgeon Atul Gawande explores the power and the limits of medicine, offering an unflinching view from the scalpel’s edge. *Complications* lays bare a science not in its idealized form but as it actually is—uncertain, perplexing, and profoundly human.

Editorial Reviews

Amazon.com Review

Gently dismantling the myth of medical infallibility, Dr. Atul Gawande's *Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science* is essential reading for anyone involved in medicine--on either end of the stethoscope. Medical professionals make mistakes, learn on the job, and improvise much of their technique and self-confidence. Gawande's tales are humane and passionate reminders that doctors are people, too. His prose is thoughtful and deeply engaging, shifting from sometimes painful stories of suffering patients (including his own child) to intriguing suggestions for improving medicine with the same care he expresses in the surgical theater. Some of his ideas will make health care providers nervous or even angry, but his disarming style, confessional tone, and thoughtful arguments should win over most readers.

Complications is a book with heart and an excellent bedside manner, celebrating rather than berating doctors for being merely human. --Rob Lightner --

From Publishers Weekly

Medicine reveals itself as a fascinatingly complex and "fundamentally human endeavor" in this distinguished debut essay collection by a surgical resident and staff writer for the New Yorker. Gawande, a former Rhodes scholar and Harvard Medical School graduate, illuminates "the moments in which medicine actually happens," and describes his profession as an "enterprise of constantly changing knowledge, uncertain information, fallible individuals, and at the same time lives on the line." Gawande's background in philosophy and ethics is evident throughout these pieces, which range from edgy accounts of medical traumas to sobering analyses of doctors' anxieties and burnout.

With humor, sensitivity and critical intelligence, he explores the pros and cons of new technologies, including a controversial factory model for routine surgeries that delivers superior success rates while dramatically cutting costs. He also describes treatment of such challenging conditions as morbid obesity, chronic pain and necrotizing fasciitis the often-fatal condition caused by dreaded "flesh-eating bacteria" and probes the agonizing process by which physicians balance knowledge and intuition to make seemingly impossible decisions. What draws practitioners to this challenging profession, he concludes, is the promise of "the alterable moment the fragile but crystalline opportunity for one's know-how, ability or just gut instinct to change the course of another's life for the better." These exquisitely crafted essays, in which medical subjects segue into explorations of much larger themes, place Gawande among the best in the field. National author tour.

Disclaimer: This information is not intended as a substitute for medical or chiropractic professional help or advice, but is to be used only as an aide in understanding spinal and nerve issues.

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