

NORTH AMERICAN SPINE SOCIETY

A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

22 CALENDAR COURT, 2ND FLOOR, LA GRANGE, ILLINOIS 60525 USA
TOLL-FREE (877)SPINEDR PHONE (708)588-8080 FAX (708)588-1080 WWW.SPINE.ORG

NASS Endorses Universal Protocol for Preventing Wrong Site, Wrong Procedure, Wrong Person Surgery

LaGrange, IL--In October 2003, the North American Spine Society (NASS) formally endorsed the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations' (JCAHO) *Universal Protocol for Preventing Wrong Site, Wrong Procedure, Wrong Person Surgery*. Compliance with the protocol by all accredited organizations providing surgical services will be required beginning July 1, 2004. "Wrong-site surgery is easily prevented and we endorse all efforts to prevent these events in our patients," said David A. Wong, MD, MSc, Immediate Past President and Patient Safety Co-chair. "This endorsement is a continuation of NASS' efforts to prevent wrong-site spinal surgery which began with our Sign, Mark & X-ray program in 2001."

The Universal Protocol is a consensus product of the national Summit on Wrong Site Surgery convened last spring, in which NASS participated. The Summit was convened by JCAHO, the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, the American College of Physicians, the American College of Surgeons, the American Dental Association and the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons.

The NASS Sign, Mark & X-ray program is geared toward spine surgeons to prevent wrong-site spinal surgery and varies from the protocol only in that the "time-out" is assumed. The most common error in spine surgery occurs when a procedure is done one-level above the intended site. Copies of the Sign, Mark & X-ray can be found on the NASS Web site at: <http://www.spine.org/patientsafety.cfm>. The JCAHO Universal Protocol and Implementation Guidelines are available at: http://www.jcaho.org/accredited+organizations/patient+safety/universal+protocol/wss_universal+protocol.htm.

Information on NASS and Sign, Mark & X-ray:

Deanna Marchetti
North American Spine Society
(708) 588-8071
Fax (708) 588-1080
E-mail Marchetti@spine.org

Information on JCAHO Universal Protocol:

Charlene Hill, Media Relations
JCAHO
(630) 792-5175
E-mail mchill@jcaho.org