



The American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists
WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS

Surgical Assistants

Position Statement

Competent surgical assistants, such as other physicians and non-physician surgical assistants, should be available for all major obstetric and gynecologic operations. In many cases, the complexity of the surgery or the patient's condition will require the assistance of one or more physicians to provide the patient with the safest care possible. Often, the complexity of a given surgical procedure cannot be determined prospectively. Procedures including, but not limited to, operative laparoscopy, major abdominal surgery, vaginal surgery, vulvar surgery, and cesarean delivery may warrant the assistance of another physician to optimize safe surgical care.

The primary surgeon's judgment and prerogative in determining the number and qualifications of surgical assistants should not be overruled by public or private third-party payers. Surgical assistants should be appropriately compensated.

NOTE: This Position Statement replaces Committee Opinion No. 240: Statement on Surgical Assistants; August 2000.

Approved by the Executive Board: January 2016
Reaffirmed: July 2018