



LATAM-URG Study: A Collaborative Investigation of Urgent Abdominal Procedures in Latin America.

Nicolás Avellaneda¹, Helio Moreira Junior², Bruno Augusto Alves Martins³, Dion Morton⁴.

Correspondence: Nicolás Avellaneda, CEMIC University Hospital, Argentina. Email: n.avellaneda86@gmail.com

1. CEMIC University Hospital, Argentina.
2. Goiás Federal University Hospital, Brazil.
3. University Hospital of Brasilia, Brazil.
4. University of Birmingham, UK.

Cite as: Avellaneda, N., Morton, D., Alves Martins, B. A., & Moreira Junior, H. LATAM-URG Study: A Collaborative Investigation of Urgent Abdominal Procedures in Latin America. *Impact Surgery*, 1(6), 206–207. <https://doi.org/10.62463/surgery.100>

The LATAM-URG study was initiated to address a critical gap in the understanding of the incidence, management, and outcomes of urgent abdominal procedures in Latin America. The primary purpose of this study is to gather comprehensive data that will inform clinical practice, improve patient outcomes, and contribute to the global body of knowledge on emergency surgical care. Specifically, the study aims to quantify the burden of these procedures, assess variations in surgical practice, and identify factors that contribute to the high mortality associated with laparotomy in the region.

Urgent abdominal procedures, particularly laparotomy, are among the most common emergency surgeries performed worldwide. However, the outcomes of these procedures can vary significantly depending on the region, the healthcare infrastructure, and the practices of individual surgeons. In Latin America, where healthcare resources and access to advanced surgical care can vary widely, there is an urgent need for data that reflects the realities of the region. The LATAM-URG study seeks to provide this data, filling a critical gap in our understanding of how these procedures are managed and what outcomes can be expected.

European Society of Coloproctology's Global Reach Vision

The European Society of Coloproctology (ESCP) has long addressed the need for global collaboration in surgical research and education. The LATAM-URG study is a key component of the ESCP's Global Reach vision, which aims to extend the benefits of high-quality surgical care and research to all regions of the world, particularly those that have historically been underrepresented in global studies.

The ESCP's involvement in the LATAM-URG study underscores its commitment to supporting research that

has a direct impact on patient care. By sponsoring and actively participating in this study, ESCP is helping to build the capacity of Latin American surgeons and researchers to conduct high-quality research that is relevant to their specific clinical environments. This collaboration is expected to lead to improved surgical outcomes not only in Latin America but also globally, as the findings from this study will contribute to the development of more effective and standardized approaches to managing urgent abdominal conditions.

Developing a Scientific Network in Latin America

One of the most significant outcomes of the LATAM-URG study will be the establishment of a robust scientific network across Latin America. This network will bring together hospitals, surgeons, researchers, and healthcare administrators from across the region, fostering collaboration and the exchange of knowledge. The development of this network is a critical step towards improving surgical care in Latin America, as it will enable the sharing of best practices, the dissemination of research findings, and the coordination of future studies.

The creation of this network also aligns with broader global health goals, as it will enhance the capacity of Latin American institutions to participate in and contribute to international research efforts. By strengthening the ties between Latin American hospitals and their counterparts in other regions, the LATAM-URG study will help to ensure that Latin America is better represented in global surgical research and that the unique challenges and opportunities of the region are more widely understood.

Surgeons Working Together to Benefit Their Patients

At the heart of the LATAM-URG study is the belief that collaboration among surgeons is essential for improving patient outcomes. The study brings together a diverse



group of surgeons from across Latin America, all of whom share a common goal: to provide the best possible care for their patients. By working together, these surgeons can pool their knowledge, experience, and resources, leading to more effective and efficient care for patients undergoing urgent abdominal procedures.

Hypothesis

The LATAM-URG study is based on the hypothesis that laparotomy, a common emergency surgical procedure, is associated with a high mortality rate in Latin America, potentially ranging from 10% to 50%. This hypothesis is grounded in the observation that the causes of surgical emergencies and the outcomes of procedures like laparotomy can vary significantly across different regions of the world.

One of the key questions the LATAM-URG study seeks to answer is whether the high mortality rate associated with laparotomy in Latin America is due to variations in patient selection, surgical practices, or other factors unique to the region. Importantly, there has been no previous study specifically focused on urgent abdominal procedures in Latin America, leaving a significant gap in our understanding of how these procedures are managed and what outcomes can be expected. By filling this gap, the LATAM-URG study will provide much-needed data on the conditions that are most treated in the region and the outcomes of these treatments.

Alignment with Global Health Developments

The LATAM-URG study is closely aligned with recent developments in global health, particularly the Emergency and Operative Care (ECO) resolution (76.2) adopted by the World Health Organization (WHO). This resolution prioritizes the strengthening of emergency care and surgical systems as essential components of universal health coverage. The WHO has recognized that improving care for common and life-threatening conditions, such as those requiring laparotomy, is crucial for achieving better health outcomes and reducing mortality worldwide.

By focusing on the management of urgent abdominal procedures in Latin America, the LATAM-URG study directly supports the goals of the ECO resolution. The study's findings will provide valuable insights into how surgical systems in the region can be strengthened, leading to improvements in emergency care pathways more broadly. Furthermore, the study will contribute to the global effort to reduce disparities in surgical care, ensuring that patients in Latin America have access to the same high standards of care as those in other regions.

Conclusion

The LATAM-URG study represents a significant step forward in our understanding of urgent abdominal procedures in Latin America. By bringing together a

diverse group of surgeons, researchers, and hospitals, the study is creating a new scientific network that will continue to benefit the region for years to come. Supported by the European Society of Coloproctology and many other Latin-American societies aligned with global health priorities, LATAM-URG study is poised to make a lasting impact on the care of patients in Latin America and beyond. Through this collaboration, we hope to improve the outcomes of urgent abdominal procedures. Any physician wishing to be involved in LATAM-URG study is welcome to contact latam.urg@gmail.com.

Conflicts of interest: none declared.

References

1. Meara, J, McClain C, Park K. "Intersectoral Integration of National Surgical Plans". *Impact Surgery* 2004. 1 (3):79-80. <https://doi.org/10.62463/surgery.67>.
2. Glasbey J., George, C, Martin J. Why do people die after surgery? A call for research action: post-operative mortality. *Impact Surgery*, 2004. 1(3), 90–92. <https://doi.org/10.62463/surgery.66>