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Biofilms and surgical site infections

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Surgical site infections are common in human and veterinary medicine and can result in increased morbidity and mortality as well as adding to overall healthcare costs. Surgical site infections are nosocomial infections and can be classified as superficial incisional, deep incisional, or organ-space. Biofilm-producing bacteria in surgical site infections have survival advantages compared to sessile bacteria, making diagnosis and treatment more challenging. Treatment of surgical site infections varies and depends on the type of infection, drug susceptibility,

patient factors and wound factors. Preoperative, intraoperative and postoperative measures can be taken to prevent the development of surgical site infections. Surgical materials to reduce the likelihood of biofilm formation have been developed, but strong evidence to support their use is lacking. Further prospective studies and the development of active surveillance programmes are warranted.

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