

Overconfidence

see [Humility](#).

In neurosurgery, overconfidence is not just a personality flaw — it is a clinical hazard.

□ Why Overconfidence Is Dangerous: Risk Underestimation: Leads to dismissing critical red flags, cutting corners in workup, or proceeding with surgery without optimal conditions.

Complication Denial: Delays recognition and management of intraoperative or postoperative complications.

Team Breakdown: Makes junior staff afraid to question decisions, undermining safety culture.

Learning Stagnation: Confident surgeons may stop questioning their decisions or reviewing their own outcomes — halting growth.

□ Neurosurgical Specifics: A millimeter's error can mean paralysis, aphasia, or death. Confidence must be backed by humility and constant re-evaluation.

Every patient, even with a “routine” pathology, can behave unpredictably.

Overconfidence is particularly lethal in emergencies, where fast decisions must still be grounded in reality.

□ The Antidote: Deliberate Humility Ask for help.

Debrief after every case.

Accept criticism.

Review errors publicly in M&M meetings.

As Atul Gawande said:

“Better to be uncertain and careful than sure and wrong.”

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