



UW surgeon, Dr. Tom Varghese Jr.

VITALS

- **GRANT AMOUNT**
\$4,068,900
- **ECONOMIC IMPACT**
Over \$13M in new grants for UW and over \$67M in health-care cost savings for Washington
- **HEALTH IMPACT**
Over 350 lives saved
- **OTHER IMPACT**
A nationally-recognized program for safer and more effective surgery

Safer Surgery Across Washington

University of Washington surgeon David Flum is on a crusade to make surgery safer. He and his colleagues, such as Dr. Tom Varghese Jr. pictured above, and hospitals around the state, are working to improve every stage of surgical care.

With Life Sciences Discovery Fund support, Dr. Flum implemented a checklist to standardize OR procedures. Similar to the checklist pilots tick through before take-off, the list asks questions such as: Is this the right patient and the right operation? Is the full surgical team here and does everyone know their role? Are the medical records and images at hand? Simple steps like these have helped save \$67 million in unneeded health-care costs and averted over 200 reoperations.

Flum and Varghese also launched the Strong for Surgery program to enhance pre-operative care and maximize positive post-surgery outcomes. It turns out that an apple a day and kicking the habit are smart moves before going under the knife. Studies confirm that good nutritional status helps patients heal better and fight infection. Research also shows that smoking cessation decreases complications ranging from poor lung function and slow wound healing to cardiovascular events such as heart attack.

"We're improving surgical outcomes from a variety of angles, all of which depend upon using standardized procedures and carefully-tracked results. This is the future of health care," Flum says. "This is a better future for patients."

Life Sciences

DISCOVERY FUND

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