

Joseph Lister's method, based on the use of antiseptics, is no longer employed, his principle that bacteria must never gain entry into an operation wound, remains the basis of surgery to this day. Having observed the marked difference in morbidity and mortality between simple and compound fractures, he postulated that infection came from exposure to the air in compound fractures without the protection of the skin. He began his antiseptic method with compound fracture wounds because the standard treatment of amputation was always available should his method fail. Lister made many alterations to his method of wound care, and the iconic carbolic acid spray was only 1 part of the evolution of antisepsis.