Postoperative Fever by Timing

When the fever starts points to its cause: the lungs first, the wound and abscesses later

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Immediate (intra/postoperative)

previous infection · transfusion reaction · purulent cavities

24h

First 24 hours

atelectasis · wound infection by anaerobes or group A streptococcus

72h

24 to 72 hours

septic phlebitis (catheters) · pneumonia

>3d

After day 3

surgical wound infection · UTI · intra-abdominal abscess (fistula) · deep vein thrombosis

Wind, about day 1
Atelectasis

Water, about day 3
Urinary infection (catheter)

Wound and Walking
Wound about day 5, DVT about days 5-7

Early exception: wound infection in the first 24 h by Streptococcus pyogenes or Clostridium · after day 7, abscess, anastomotic leak or drug fever