

JACK PAAR,
television
legend of
the '50s
and '60s



PIONEERING "Tonight Show" host Jack Paar was the victim of a shocking medical mistake — a surgical sponge was left deep inside him during open-heart surgery.

Now friends are whispering that the error might have hastened his death.

Paar's widow Miriam, who was married to him for 60 years, told *The ENQUIRER*: "It was a mistake on the doctor's part. Jack and I had long discussions about what we should do, we tried to be honest about the effect it would have on his livelihood.

"But we finally decided it was better not to go back and risk another serious operation, so he lived the rest of his life with a sponge lodged next to his heart.

"Jack did his best to live a normal life after that. He had first-rate medical care, and he was cooperative and optimistic."

A sponge or instrument gets left inside patients in about one of every 1,500 open-chest

DOCTOR LEFT JACK PAAR'S HEART — friends fear it might have hastened death

or abdominal operations, say Harvard researchers.

"For the patient, the misplaced item may mean another operation, a dangerous inflammatory reaction, or even death," according to the research findings.

The star's longtime close friend Phyllis Diller revealed to *The ENQUIRER*:

"Jack was never quite the same after his heart bypass operation. From then on, his health was in decline — and years later, he had a massive stroke that left him paralyzed.

"It was devastating to both

him and Miriam. Jack was bedridden and completely paralyzed, except for his right hand. He couldn't even talk!

"Miriam was a true guardian angel. Jack needed total care; he was almost totally incapacitated.

"But Miriam dealt with it bravely, she was always by his side. She's a delicate little woman, and it was hard on her. But she never complained. She treated him with love, devotion and kindness to the very end.

Paar underwent his seventh-hour quadruple bypass surge