

History of surgery

[Health & Medicine](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Due The History of Surgery Surgery is a medical specialty with ancient roots in terms of manual operative techniques instrumental in diagnosing/investigating and treating patient pathological conditions such injury and/or disease. According to one of the pioneer surgeons Ambroise Pare, surgeries were essentially crucial in eliminating, restoring, separating and joining that which is superfluous and dislocated to unite, divide and repair the defects of nature (Gonzalez-Crussi 34). Indeed, since the invention of surgery as a special branch of medicine as a profession, the association of human talents in the development of surgical techniques to modern sophistications has been utterly inseparable. In fact, initial surgical operations occurred long before people had substantial knowledge of how the body really works. Evidence of trephination (a little exposure of the brain through scrapping of the skull) goes back to the Neolithic era (Brothwell 126). The era of civilization saw Egyptians, the Chinese, Indians and the Greeks perform varied surgical operations such stitching of minor wounds to the complex C-section. The exact nature to the success of these procedures goes beyond the scope of this paper.

Prior to the industrial revolution, bleeding, pain and infection plagued the medical profession with dire consequences. As such, overcoming these key, principal obstacles remained focal points of conscious transformation of surgery from a 'risky art' into an effective discipline guided by scientific principles. Until the discovery of anesthetics in the 1840s and so to the subsequent development of antiseptic techniques beginning from the year 1867 by John Lister, surgery was an adventurous experience built upon trial and painful error. Depending on the level of knowledge then, application of anesthetic kind of principles to ease pain was probably equivalent to getting <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-surgery/>

the patient take a bottle of scotch before actual operation (Bynum 75-76). Bleeding due to surgical cuts was remedied by cauterization (sealing of blood vessels with extreme heat via thick, small branded iron) (Cruce, 56). As painful as it was, the method worked, but with higher prospects of causing additional problems of tissue destruction of the affected area. Under such circumstances, cleanliness was the only sure way to keep infections at bay. To the ancient Greeks, bathing of wounds with wine/alcohol was another preventive measure to infections (Risse 56). Notably, a lack of understanding of the inner operative structures was clearly evident. Building on individual inventions and innovations without properly cultivated research, improvements into the advanced profession inexistence today characterized an abundance of desperate measures by the early practitioners to solve patient problems.

Work cited

Brothwell, Don R. Digging up Bones; the Excavation, Treatment and Study of Human Skeletal

Remains. London: British Museum (Natural History), 1963. Print.

Bynum, W. F. Science and the practice of Medicine in the Nineteenth Century.

Cambridge: Cambridge, 1994. Print.

Cruce, A. A. A system of surgery by Alexander Bell. (2nd ed). Edinburgh (Scotland): C. Elliot

Publisher, 1785. Print.

Gonzalez-Crussi, F. The Rise of Surgery, in: A Short History of Medicine. New York: The

Modern Library, 2008. Print.

<https://assignbuster.com/history-of-surgery/>

Risse, G. B. Mending bodies, saving souls: a history of hospitals. Oxford University Press, 1990.

Print.