

# Historical Timeline of the Department of Surgery NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital/Weill Cornell Medical Center



Date	Event
<b>1791-1932</b>	<p align="center"><b>General History:</b></p> <p>New York Hospital offers surgical services at its first and second locations.</p>
<b>1878</b>	<p align="center"><b>Division History: Orthopedic Surgery</b></p> <p>New York Hospital offers a clinic for orthopedic surgery in the Outpatient Department at its second location on West 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets between Fifth and Sixth Avenues.</p>
<b>1887-1893</b>	<p align="center"><b>Division History: Otolaryngology</b></p> <p>New York Hospital offers a clinic for nose and throat diseases in the Outpatient Department at its second location on West 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Streets.</p>
<b>1898-1932</b>	<p align="center"><b>General History:</b></p> <p>Cornell University Medical College trains medical students in surgical procedures in the Department of Surgery led by Dr. Lewis Stimson. In addition, surgical specialties are taught in the following special departments: Laryngology and Rhinology, Otology, Ophthalmology, Orthopedic Surgery, and Genito-Urinary Diseases (Urology). In addition, the college offers patient care in these surgical specialties in the college's dispensary.</p> <p>Dr. Charles Gibson becomes chairman after Dr. Stimson's death in 1917.</p>
<b>1898</b>	<p align="center"><b>Division History: Anesthesiology</b></p> <p>Dr. Thomas Bennett is hired as an anesthesiologist at New York Hospital. Later in 1902, the Private Patient Service had its own anesthesiologist. Along with doctors, nurses administer anesthetics.</p>

**1900**

**Division History: Otolaryngology and Ophthalmology**

Dr. John Adams is hired by New York Hospital as a consulting otologist and ophthalmologist.

**1909**

**Division History: Dentistry**

Dr. Henry Sage Dunning is hired by New York Hospital as a consulting dental surgeon.

**1911**

**Division History: Urology**

New York Hospital offers a genito-urinary clinic at its House of Relief facility on Hudson Street.

**1911-  
1967**

**Division History: Second (Cornell) Surgical Division**

Cornell University Medical College begins an affiliation with Bellevue Hospital that offers surgical services under the Second (Cornell) Surgical Division. The affiliation continues at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center.

**1912**

**Division History: Dentistry**

A dental clinic is organized at New York Hospital.

**1920**

**Division History: Urology**

James Buchanan Brady, a wealthy benefactor, dies leaving money in his will for a urological service at New York Hospital. The urology department is organized as the James Buchanan Brady Foundation and opens in December. The department, located on the second floor of the Private Patients Building, features an outpatient clinic and inpatient beds. Later the department grows to include an x-ray facility and a clinic for cancer of the urinary tract. An artist, a pathologist, and a librarian are members of the staff. In 1925, a pay clinic is established.

**1921**

**Division History: Otolaryngology**

A throat clinic is offered in the Outpatient Department of New York Hospital. Dr. Samuel Knopf is hired as a laryngologist.

**1925-  
1926**

**General History:**

Dr. Rufus Stetson is hired by New York Hospital as a transfusionist in 1925. The following year, Dr. Frank Yeomans is hired as a proctologist (rectal diseases).

**1927**

In June, The Society of the New York Hospital and Cornell University sign an affiliation agreement leading to the formation of New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center.



**1932-1939**

**1932**

### **General History:**

In September, New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center opens. The Department of Surgery is one of the five major clinical departments of the new medical center.

**1932-1947**

Dr. George Heuer serves as chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

**1932**

Along with general surgery, the department has sub-specialties in otolaryngology (Dr. Arthur Palmer), ophthalmology (Dr. Bernard Samuels), orthopedic surgery (Dr. Charlton Wallace), and urology. Both clinical services and teaching programs are offered.

### **Division History: Anesthesiology**

An anesthesia service, led by Dr. Ella Hediger, is a section under the Department of Surgery.

**1932**

### **Division History: Surgical Pathology**

The Surgical Pathology Laboratory, led by Dr. N. Chandler Foot, performs routine diagnosis of pathological specimens removed during surgeries.

### **Division History: Urology**

The urology clinics, from Cornell University Medical College's Pay Clinic and New York Hospital's Outpatient Department, merge to form the Cornell Urology Service led by Dr. Alexander Stevens. The James Buchanan Brady Foundation, led by Dr. Oswald Lowsley, continues as a separate urological service.

**1932-1936**

### **Division History: Dentistry**

A dental clinic, led by Dr. A. LeRoy Johnson, is operated under the Department of Surgery. A dental hygienist examines all patients admitted to the hospital. In 1936, Guggenheim Foundation for Dental Care takes over the oral hygiene services. All patients who have general anesthesia must have oral hygiene performed prior to the surgery to prevent bacterial infections.

**1937**

**Medical Education Highlight: Nurse Anesthetists**

The School for Nurse Anesthetists is organized.

**1937-  
1958**

**Division History: Physiotherapy**

The Physiotherapy Department, which was organized at New York Hospital ca. 1928, is placed under the Department of Surgery. In 1950, it changes its name to the Division of Physical Medicine. In 1958, the division is placed under the Department of Medicine.



**1940-1949**

**1940s**

**Research Highlight: Cardiology/Cardiovascular Surgery**

Drs. Harold Stewart, chief of the Division of Cardiology, and George Heuer develop clinical criteria and surgical therapy for constrictive pericarditis.

**1943**

**Division History: Anesthesiology**

Anesthesiology is proposed as a sub-department by the Medical Board.

**1944**

**Patient Care Highlight: Ophthalmology**

The first eye bank in United States to store human corneas for transplant operations opens at New York Hospital. New York Hospital's first corneal transplant is performed the following year.

**1945**

**Patient Care Highlight: Cleft Palate Speech Clinic**

A cleft palate speech clinic, one of the first of its kind in the country, is established.

**1947-  
1967**

**General History:**

Dr. Frank Glenn serves as chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

**1947**

**Medical Education Highlight: Televised Surgery**

In September, RCA broadcasts the first televised operations performed at New York Hospital to the American College of Surgeons' conference at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York.

### **Division History: Plastic Surgery**

Plastic Surgery is developed as a division with an outpatient clinic and inpatient beds. Dr. Herbert Conway, the chief of plastic surgery, had begun developing a plastic surgery service in 1935 when a Plastic Surgery Clinic was opened in the Outpatient Department.

### **Division History: Neurosurgery**

Neurosurgery is more formally developed with an outpatient clinic and inpatient beds. Dr. Bronson Ray, chief of neurosurgery, had begun developing the neurosurgery service in 1936.

**1948**

### **Division History: Dental Surgery**

Dental Surgery, led by Dr. Stanley Behrman, is more formally organized.

**1949**

### **Division History: Urology**

In September, the Cornell Urology Service and the James Buchanan Brady Foundation merges to form one urology division.

**Late  
1940s-  
1950s**

### **Division History: Cardiothoracic Surgery**

Cardiothoracic surgery is developed with new advances such as open-heart surgery and artificial heart-lung machines.



**1950-1959**

**1951-  
1955**

### **Division History: Orthopedic Surgery**

The Division of Orthopedic Surgery is integrated with the Hospital for Special Surgery, which opens at its new location on East 70<sup>th</sup> Street in 1955.

**1954**

### **Research Highlight: Anesthesiology**

Drs. Frank Glenn and Joseph Artusio develop ether analgesia, which allows a patient to be conscious without feeling any pain or memory of the surgery.

**1955**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Fracture Service**

The Fracture Service, led by Dr. Preston Wade, is established in June.

### **Patient Care Highlight: Otolaryngology**

The Speech and Hearing Clinic is approved for handicapped children in July. An audiologist position is first approved in 1950 by the Medical Board.

**1956**

### **Medical Education Highlight: Trauma Course**

In June, the Postgraduate Course in Fractures and Other Trauma is offered by Cornell University Medical College for surgeons in the field. This course becomes an annual event.

**1957**

### **Division History: Dental and Oral Surgery**

The Division of Dental Surgery is now called Division of Dental and Oral Surgery. The American Dental Association approves a residency program for oral surgery. Later in 1989, the division changes its name to Division of Dental, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. By 2003, the word "dental" had been dropped from the title.

### **Department History: Anesthesiology**

In July, the Division of Anesthesiology, led Dr. Joseph Artusio, becomes an independent department at New York Hospital. It becomes a separate department at the medical college in 1967.

### **Patient Care Highlight: Tumor Registry**

Dr. George Cornell establishes the Tumor Registry.

**1958**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Cardiothoracic Surgery/Open Heart Surgery**

Open-Heart surgery is performed at the hospital using an artificial heart-lung machine.

**1958-  
1961**

### **Research Highlight: Anesthesiology**

Drs. Joseph Artusio and Alan Van Poznak develop methoxyflurane, a non-flammable ether inhalation anesthetic.



**1960-1969**

**1960**

**Division History: Pediatric Surgery**

In January, Pediatric Surgery, led by Dr. S. Frank Redo, opens as a joint unit under the Departments of Surgery and Pediatrics. The new unit offers general surgery, thoracic, cardiovascular, head and neck and abdominal surgeries. Children from premature infants to fourteen years of age are treated.

**1962**

**Patient Care Highlight: Hypothermia Brain Surgery**

Drs. Bronson Ray and Russel Patterson, Jr. use hypothermia to create a bloodless brain surgery for treatment of arterial aneurysms.

**1963**

**Patient Care Highlight: Ophthalmology**

Drs. Harvey Lincoff and John McLean begin performing cryosurgery for retinal detachments. Cryosurgery had already been in use for treating skin conditions and diseases in the Division of Dermatology under the Department of Medicine.

**1963**

**Patient Care Highlight: Kidney Transplant**

The renal group, led by Dr. Albert Rubin, performs first kidney transplant in the New York metropolitan area.

**1964**

**Patient Care Highlight: Cardiothoracic Surgery**

The Thoracic Surgery Unit opens in July for patients with cardiac and pulmonary disease.

**1966**

**Patient Care Highlight: Kidney Transplants**

The Kidney Transplant Program is established.

**1967-  
1970**

**General History:**

Dr. C. Walton Lillehei serves as chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

**1968**

**Patient Care Highlight: Heart Transplant**

New York Hospital's first heart transplant is performed by a team of twelve doctors led by Drs. C. Walton Lillehei and Cranston Holman.

**Department History: Ophthalmology and Otorhinolaryngology**

In September, an affiliation with Manhattan Eye and Ear Hospital leads to the creation of the Departments of Ophthalmology, led by Dr. Donald Shafer, and Otorhinolaryngology led by Dr. James Moore.

**1969**

**Patient Care Highlight: Heart and Lung Transplant**

Heart and lung transplant is performed at New York Hospital.

1969

### **Patient Care Highlight: Multi-Transplant Surgery**

A multiple transplant surgery is performed. A heart, two kidneys, a liver, and two corneas are taken from one patient and transplanted into six patients at the Memorial and New York Hospitals. The New York Hospital's annual report claims this was the largest multi-transplant operation in the world and the first intra-hospital transplant.

### **Division History: Pediatric Urology**

The Children's Urological Pavilion opens on November 7<sup>th</sup>. This pavilion is jointly operated by the Departments of Surgery and Pediatrics.



1970-1979

1970-  
1971

### **General History:**

Dr. Preston Wade serves as acting chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

1971-  
1974

Dr. Paul Ebert serves as chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

1973

### **Patient Care Highlight: Dr. Frank Glenn Surgical ICU**

The Dr. Frank Glenn Surgical Intensive Care Unit opens in January and consists of nine beds for heart and lung surgery patients. Equipment for monitoring the patients is built into the walls or hangs from the ceiling.

### **Patient Care Highlight: Nathan and Joanne Cummings Operating Suite**

The Nathan and Joanne Cummings Operating Suite opens in April consisting of three theaters for open-heart and other complicated surgeries. The equipment for anesthesia, hypothermia and heart-lung machine drop down from columns suspended from the ceiling.

1974-  
1975

### **General History:**

Dr. Bjorn Thorbjarnarson serves as acting chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

1975-  
1991

Dr. G. Tom Shires serves as chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

**1976-  
1977**

### **Division History: Burn Center**

The first full service Burn Center in the New York metropolitan area opens in December. A 1977 expansion of the facility, which includes the FDNY Skin Bank, makes it the largest burn center in the country. In 1998, the burn center is renamed William Randolph Hearst Burn Center.



**1980-2007**

**1986**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Vasectomy**

Dr. Marc Goldstein performs one of the first non-scalpel vasectomies in the United States.

**1987**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Ambulatory Surgery Center**

The Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Ambulatory Surgery Center is dedicated on May 11th.

**1991-  
1993**

### **General History:**

Dr. Roger Yurt serves as acting chairman/surgeon-in-chief

**1991**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Laparoscopy**

The New York Hospital's staff uses the laparoscopy for lymph node dissections, chest and pelvic surgeries, and hysterectomies.

**1992**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Breast Center**

The Strang Cornell Breast Center is established.

**1992**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Urology**

Drs. E. Darracott Vaughan and Aaron Perlmutter are the first in New York metropolitan area to use laser prostatectomy for benign prostate enlargement.

**1993**

### **Department History: Cardiothoracic Surgery**

The specialty of cardiothoracic surgery, led by Dr. O. Wayne Isom, becomes its own department in July.

## **Department History: Urology**

The Division of Urology, led by Dr. E. Darracott Vaughan, becomes a separate department in July.

**1993-  
2002**

### **General History:**

Dr. John Daly serves as chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

**1994**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Bone Marrow**

A new bone transplant program, led by Dr. Subhash Gulati, is established.

**1998-  
1999**

### **Department History: Orthopedic Surgery**

The Division of Orthopedic Surgery, led by Dr. Russell Warren, becomes its own department.

**1999**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Breast Cancer**

Breast surgeons at the medical center are the first in New York City to perform skin-sparing mastectomies. The breast cancer program is now called the Columbia Weill Cornell Cancer Centers.

**2001**

### **Department History: Neurological Surgery**

The Division of Neurological Surgery, led by Dr. Philip Stieg, becomes its own department.

**2002-  
2004**

### **General History:**

Dr. William T. Stubenbord serves as acting chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

**2002**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Minimal Access Surgery**

The Minimal Access Surgery Center is established for digestive diseases. Surgeries are performed using laparoscopy and robots.

**2004-**

### **General History:**

Dr. Fabrizio Michelassi is appointed chairman/surgeon-in-chief.

**2006**

### **Patient Care Highlight: Bariatric Surgery**

The Bariatric Surgery Center is the first in New York State and seventh in the nation to receive the highest accreditation rating by the American College of Surgeons.