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Surgery, then and now: A historical flashback

I love history, and I believe that those who do not learn from their history are condemned to repeat it. Now that I have retired from active surgery, my presentations are mostly based on experiences with surgery and medical education. I have personal experience of more than six decades of practice of surgery and have seen many surgical landmarks in my life time. Surgery has come a long way from the practice of barber surgeons to upcoming practice of robotic surgery. We owe this progress to many stalwarts, some of whom I had the opportunity to work with. It is a challenge for me to condense surgical history of at least five millennia in few minutes allotted to me. I have learnt the history of medicine, covering the period till the middle of last century, through the enormous literature available on the subject. Being a surgeon, historical progress of surgery was of special interest to me. I obtained my basic medical degrees in 1959. Anything after that is contemporary history for me; something I witnessed or was an integral part of it. I have

evidence, records and vivid memories of these six decades in which I actively practiced surgery. I started as a general surgeon, and I retired as one. As destiny would have it, circumstances provided me with opportunities where I had to deal with surgical problems of every system of the body, and sometimes, under most handicapped circumstances. These challenges made me rise to the occasion. The result is that I had the experience of journey through the progress of surgery during these sixty years, and my pleasure of keeping the concept of general surgery alive, in the age of specialization and super-specialization. My interests in medical education and my involvement in curriculum development made me to explore newer concepts in medical education, based on the historical developments and the demands of changing times. My presentation will cover this journey through slides and anecdotes, hopefully in 20-30 minutes, depending on the time allotted to me.

Biography

Shyam K Parashar is a 1959 Medical graduate of G. R. Medical College Gwalior, India. In 1962, he obtained the degree of 'Master of Surgery' [M.S.] from Vikram University, India. In 1981, he joined King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia, [later renamed as Dammam University] as Professor of Surgery and as Consultant Surgeon at King Fahd teaching hospital of the University. He also held additional appointments as Director for Internship training program and later as Director for post-graduate training program in surgery. He has more than seventy scientific publications in Indian, Saudi and International Journals. He has been examiner in many Indian and Saudi universities; as well as for Fellowships in Surgery of Saudi Boards and Arab Boards.

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