



Surgery

The Way I Teach!

Lecture Notes on Basic Principles of Surgery

Shyam Parashar

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By

Shyam Parashar



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Printed and bound in India

This book is dedicated to

All the Students

*Whom I have taught, and learnt
from them, during fifty years of my
Career as a Medical Teacher*



*'Knowledge is an extraordinary gift;
the more you distribute, the more it grows!'*



Preface

I have been teaching surgery to undergraduate and postgraduate students of surgery, for the past fifty years. I started my academic career as a medical teacher when I joined the post of demonstrator in surgery in 1961. Ever since then I have taught the basic principles of surgery to my students in my own way, and in the process I learnt a lot from my students. Accordingly I continued to modify my teaching methods; however the basic approach always remained the same. I matured as I progressed in my career and became full professor of surgery in the year 1978.

While teaching and examining my students, I experienced that most of them know the answers to our questions; however very few of them understand the basis of their answers. This drove my teaching approach to be based on basic sciences; applied anatomy, applied physiology, and the pathogenesis and patho-physiology of surgical problems they encounter. I also learnt that my approach was very different from many of my colleague teachers who preferred the usual ‘Remember and Recall technique’.

I was encouraged by the response of most of my students, even in my initial years. In 1977, I was nominated by my students as ‘The Best Clinical Teacher’ at Goa medical college in India. The trend continued when I joined King Faisal University, later renamed as University of Dammam, as Professor of Surgery in 1981.

It was the encouragement by the students I taught for thirty years in Saudi Arabia that has motivated me to write this book. They used to tell me that what I teach and the way I teach, they could not find in any books. My answer to

them was very simple. I teach only what is written in the books; but I explain the facts by deriving the answers based on basic medical sciences; which usually are forgotten by the students by the time they reach clinical years.

I would use rationale based on basic medical sciences to explain every symptom mentioned in patient's history, every finding elicited on examination, process of arriving at the diagnosis, basis of choosing relevant investigations, and the choice of management. My students liked and appreciated my way of teaching.

One female student in particular, who later became my intern, constantly encouraged me and reminded me again and again to write this book. She wants to remain anonymous; however I am extremely grateful to her for the motivation she provided.

I used to tell my students and residents that performing surgery is an art which can only be learnt by apprenticeships, but knowing surgery is a science which can only be understood through the analytical process of Patho-Physiology. Once this concept is understood, rationale of surgical management becomes very simple and very clear. Similarly I used to tell them that surgeons should be well versed with gross pathology of the disease since they are the ones who have to interpret what they see as 'Living gross pathology' during open operations or endoscopic procedures. This interpretation helps them to take instant decisions on the next operative step during the procedure.

This book is based on the principle of generalization; the facts have been adjusted accordingly. I have always taught with examples from day to day life for the sake of easy understanding by the students. Same examples have been used abundantly in this book.

Simplicity and the clarity of purpose are the strength of this book. It is not

meant to replace any text book or any other book on surgery; this is meant to be like a pocket book for easy reference during clinical teaching and learning exercises. Information in this book is for average students of surgery; hence contains average basic information that a student of surgery MUST know.

I have seen the development of text books of surgery over the past fifty years. Not only their volume but their contents have changed over the years. Of course this development is welcome and essential. However in the process, what used to be the basic knowledge about principles of surgery has been diluted.

It has been my experience that students are very reluctant to even open their text books; this natural reluctance being due to frightening size of the books and too detailed and advanced contents in them, which go over the head of average student. The result is that most of the students were happy to read the lecture notes only, which provide the information that enables them to pass the objective type of examinations.

As soon as we ask them the explanations to support their answer, they just draw a blank. It was my conclusion that ‘They may know the answer, but they do not understand the subject’.

Moreover, fragmentation of surgery has resulted in the development of so many, almost independent, specialties and super-specialties. Should a student of general surgery know all that is included in modern text books, which will, obviously be at the cost of something, the ordinary simple knowledge of basic principles?

Similarly there is so much information on the internet on almost every subject, including surgery, that one is likely to get lost and confused. Most of the information may be unedited; and some even contradictory to the normally established and accepted facts. Moreover the priorities and emphasis are

invariably wrong and misplaced. An undergraduate student should definitely browse through information on the internet, specially the drawings and diagrams which may be quite convincingly explanatory. However they should not rely exclusively on the text of information available on internet.

There is obviously a gap between the necessity for knowledge of common surgical problems based on applied basic sciences; and the knowledge of extremely fast developing recent advances in surgery.

This book is meant for students of surgery to fill this gap, and as an introduction to basic principles of general surgery. It is meant to serve as a companion to students during their clinical teaching session, and for a quick revision before examinations. It covers most of the common subjects in simple form. It is not comprehensive on any subject.

Only common subjects are covered in this book. Emphasis is on explaining the information obtained from patient's history and examination on the basis of basic medical sciences. Rare conditions, high flown information which usually goes over the head of average students, and details about specialties have been deliberately kept to the minimum.

Knowledge from this book must be supplemented by details on all subjects from any standard text book of surgery.

This book is my single handed work. All the information in text is based on my knowledge and personal experience of teaching and practice of clinical surgery for more than fifty years.

All the illustrations included in this book are from the album of my personal archives. All the pictures are from my personal collection of patients, seen and managed in my surgical unit, and in my department of surgery when I was its

Chairman.

This book is based on 'Experience Based Medicine'. Therefore there is no bibliography.

I am very hopeful that this book will be liked and appreciated by the students of surgery, and will make a difference in understanding the basic principles of clinical surgery.

Prof. Shyam Parashar

29th Sept. 2013

Message

Prof. Parashar has been a founder member of the department of surgery in this university. As a teacher he has been greatly admired by his students. He has been equally admired as a surgeon by his patients. He has poured his vast teaching experience in this book. There are many books on surgery, but hardly any on understanding of the basic principles of surgery for students and teaching the techniques of surgery for instructors. The beauty of this book is its simplicity, clarity and convincing approach to most of the problems one encounters in general surgery. I am sure this book will be very useful to all the students of surgery and will become an essential component of their library.

I thank Professor Parashar for his sincere contributions to the university and to the students of surgery. It gives me great pleasure to write this message for his book. I wish him all success in his future endeavors.

*Prof. Abdulla Al-Rubaish,
President, University of Dammam Saudi Arabia,
29th March 2013*

Foreword

Professor Shyam Parashar joined the department of surgery when I was still a final year student of charter class of college of medicine. I had the privilege of attending only a few of his clinical teaching sessions. However in subsequent years, as an intern and a resident in training, I had plenty of occasions of working with him. This gave me an opportunity to observe and appreciate his personality as a clinical teacher and as a surgeon.

Prof. Parashar has the quality of making things look very simple, yet very important; be they lectures and bed side teaching sessions for undergraduate students or operating sessions for training of residents. He would explain everything based on applied basic sciences which made it easy for everyone to grasp and understand. His teaching kept his students spellbound and asking for more. His calm, composed yet meticulous approach to surgical problems and operative techniques impressed everyone. In the process everyone learnt something or the other from him.

His best quality is the sincerity of purpose and loyalty to the department. This earned him the trust of each and every member of the department. The evidence is that, most of the chairmen of the department in earlier years, appointed him as acting chairman of the department in their absence.

His ability to preserve the information in his memory, organize the documents properly in his archives and retrieve them at short notice has given him the title of historian of the department. His library still contains important documents chronologically preserved for the past thirty years. Based on his excellent memory, he has recently written a book on 'History of the Department of Surgery'.

Best compliments that the department has bestowed on him are ‘Think tank of the department’ and the ‘Wiseman of the department’.

I am happy and indeed grateful to Prof. Parashar for writing this book for the students of surgery. It will certainly help the students of surgery in their formative years because the information in this book is so basic and yet so essential, and so beautifully and scientifically explained that it will set the foundation for their further reading. The format of the book is such that the students will be able to carry it in their pockets while attending clinical sessions.

I am sure all students of surgery will enjoy reading this book and will certainly benefit from it.

I congratulate Prof. Parashar for this important contribution to surgery. I thank him for giving me the opportunity to write this foreword for his book.

*Prof. A. Al-Mulhim
Chairman, Department of Surgery,
University of Dammam, Saudi Arabia
29th March, 2013*

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to all those who have encouraged me and have supported me in my endeavor to write this book; including my students, trainees, colleagues, friends and family.

It is said that “Behind every successful man, there is a woman”.

Credit for writing this book goes to my wife, the women behind my success. She was the most popular medical teacher and clinician, and held the rank of Associate Professor of Medicine and Consultant Physician at Goa Medical College in India, when she voluntarily gave up her positions for the sake of family. However she has continued to provide free consultations to her patients. She is the main inspiration for the project of this book, and has been continuously reviewing and editing the manuscript.

I am fortunate to have many medical professionals in my family. When they learnt of my intention to write this book, they whole heartedly extended their support for the project.

My daughter, who is currently Professor of Medicine and Chairperson of the department of Internal Medicine at Tennessee University College of Medicine in USA, has also edited this book.

My Grandson, who is studying medicine in USA, and one day, intends to become a surgeon is very enthusiastic about my project to write this book.

The cover page of the book represents innumerable number of students, patients and nurses with whom I have interacted over many years of my career. I am sincerely grateful to them, since I myself have learnt a lot from this

interaction.

I want to record my thanks to the President of University of Dammam and the Chairman, department of surgery, who allowed me to distribute copies of my manuscript to my students in order to obtain their feedback. It is their overwhelmingly positive response that has encouraged me to publish this international edition for the students of surgery at large.

My special thanks to Dr. Lalit Parida, Assistant Professor of Paediatric Surgery at UD Medical College, for his assistance in incorporating pictures in the book.

Prof. Shyam Parashar
29th March, 2013

Illustrations in the Book

Illustrations in this book are exclusively from my own archives.

This archive is a collection of pathological conditions seen and managed by me and my team during fifty years of my career as a 'General Surgeon'.

I had meticulously maintained my logbook and pictures of most of my patients; specially while working at Goa Medical College, during the twelve year period, from 1969 to 1981. Most of the pictures in the book are at least forty years old.

Most of the pictures are black and white, partly due to lack of affordability of funds for colored pictures and partly for clarity and uniformity of information.

I want to record my thanks and appreciation for the photographer at Goa Medical College in India who assisted me in photographing some of my patients whose photos appear in the book.

Many of these pictures are spot diagnosis for common surgical conditions; hence they are included in this book.

Some of the illustrations are of extremely rare conditions, and are included for curiosity only. Some conditions are so rare that one may see them only rarely in one's life time. They are a spot diagnosis.

Most of this information was recorded at the back of the original photographs, which has again been reviewed with respect to accuracy of diagnosis and description.

This collection shows a vast magnitude of pathological conditions which I had

encountered in my practice in early part of my career. Severity of the conditions is obvious in the pictures, making their management extremely challenging and at times very difficult and frustrating.

It is natural for the readers to wonder as to how lesions could reach such an advanced stage! Answer is simple.

In so called third world countries, or better called developing countries, priorities in life are different. For many, it is just a matter of survival. Attention to apparently harmless and symptomless lesions is probably the last priority; immediate need is to survive and sustain the family. Moreover medical and health facilities for many are far away; physically as well as affordably.

Equally important is the ignorance of people and lack of health education. Result is that by the time patients are able to seek help, conditions are very advanced and at times beyond help, obviously to the utmost frustration of the treating doctors.

Surgical lesions, apart from trauma and severe infections, are not immediately fatal; hence they continue to grow and reach enormous proportions, as depicted in the photographs of the album.

Most of the conditions depicted in pictures in the book were recorded forty years ago. Things might have improved marginally; but those who can travel to the interiors of the developing countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East can still encounter such astonishingly advanced surgical conditions. One can only hope that we may never see such miseries ever in future in anybody's life!

I am grateful to the patients whose pictures appear in this book. They not only allowed me to photograph them willingly, but also gave me permission to use these pictures for teaching purposes, in the form of slides, projections and publications.

It is my sincere hope that those who will see these pictures, will learn from the

sufferings of those unfortunate patients whose misery is displayed in pictures in this book, and will pray for the welfare of those who still might be living, and for peace in heaven for those who are no more.

Amen!

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