

MEDICAL ENGLISH FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL TEAM CR
TOPIC 3 – SURGERY
TEXT

Surgery

Surgery has always been risky and even with modern anaesthetics, blood transfusions and antiseptics, patients will still die from the **trauma of pain, loss of blood and infections**. Apart from such complications, there are other dangers such as **bad reactions to anaesthetics, problems with wound healing, deep vein thrombosis, dehiscence** (the splitting open of a surgical wound) and depending on the state of health of the patient, **risks of lung and heart problems**.

In the past, surgery was limited to limb **amputations** and the removal of growths. Scientific discoveries and medical inventions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have moved things on a long way, though surgery is still mostly about cutting and removing.

The names of surgical procedures which involve cutting often end in **-otomy**.

These are things like

- **episiotomy**, which is enlarging the vagina to assist in birth
- **gastrotomy**, which is an incision in the stomach
- **lobotomy**, which is an operation on the frontal lobe of the brain
- **tracheotomy**, in which an incision is made into the trachea through the neck.

Surgical procedures ending in **-ectomy** involve removing things. There are operations such as:

- **appendectomy**, remove the appendix
- **lumpectomy**, to remove a lump in the breast
- **cholecystectomy**, to remove the gall bladder
- **mastectomy**, to remove all or part of the breast

Fibre optics and computers are expanding the range of **minimally invasive procedures** that surgeons can perform. Viewing what is going on inside the body, for example, can be done by keyhole surgery. The names of such procedures end in **-oscopy**. These include

- **hysteroscopy**, to diagnose uterine disorders
- **colonoscopy**, to examine the colon
- **bronchoscopy**, to examine the lungs

New materials like plastics now make it possible for surgery to rebuild and restore. These are surgical procedures ending in **-plasty**, for example

- **dermatoplasty**, which is plastic surgery of the skin
- **angioplasty**, which is the widening of a blood vessel
- **z-plasty**, which improves the appearance of scars
- **mitral valve plasty**, which is a repair of the heart.

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Scrub nurses who work in surgery are responsible for sterilizing equipment and ensuring that the operating environment is **aseptic**. Their **pre-operative duties** involve preparing patients for surgery by following **site surgery protocols**, getting information about allergies and compiling pathology results, and imaging. In the **operating theatre** they assist by anticipating what the surgeons are going to do next and watching over the patient, checking for complications. When patients leave the operating theatre, nurses monitor them very closely during the crucial **post-operative recovery period**.