

GET TO KNOW YOUR GENERAL SURGEON

The title “general surgeon” can be misleading. One might assume that we are the “Jack-of-all-trades” of the surgical world. In actuality, a general surgeon is a specialist who performs many procedures not performed by any other specialty.

Our role in the surgical care of the people of B.C. is irreplaceable. No acute care hospital with an emergency department could function without a qualified general surgeon. At the same time, most general surgeons cannot practice without hospital resources.

Today, general surgeons are the only specialists who are trained in the following fields:

- Cancers of the gastrointestinal tract (including stomach, small bowel, colon, rectum, liver and pancreas)
- Multi-system trauma care and surgery
- Abdominal trauma
- Malignant and nonmalignant breast disease
- Surgery of the gallbladder and bile ducts
- Hernia and abdominal wall surgery
- Surgery for morbid obesity and diabetes
- Surgical treatment of emergencies such as: bowel obstructions, appendicitis, bowel perforation and sepsis



“I am a trauma surgeon. I am a general surgeon.”

OUR TRAINING



General Surgeons are the ultimate surgical specialists. The broad range of diseases we treat, from head to toe and all parts in between, requires as much or more training than many other specialties that deal with only a single body system.

How do we learn it all and keep our scalpels sharp? After obtaining an MD and becoming a licensed medical doctor, general surgeons do a minimum of five years of specialty training called a residency before they can ever step into an operating room on their own. Some general surgeons choose to do further “sub specialty” training for another two to three years to become true leaders in their chosen field.

“A general surgeon could save your life if you are in a car crash, rupture your appendix, or have breast or colon cancer.”

We are also trained to perform other specialized surgeries including:

- Cancers of the head and neck and endocrine organs
- Surgical treatment of skin cancers including malignant melanoma
- Surgical treatment of soft tissue tumours and cancers
- Transplant surgery
- Laparoscopic (minimally invasive) surgery
- Diagnostic and therapeutic endoscopy

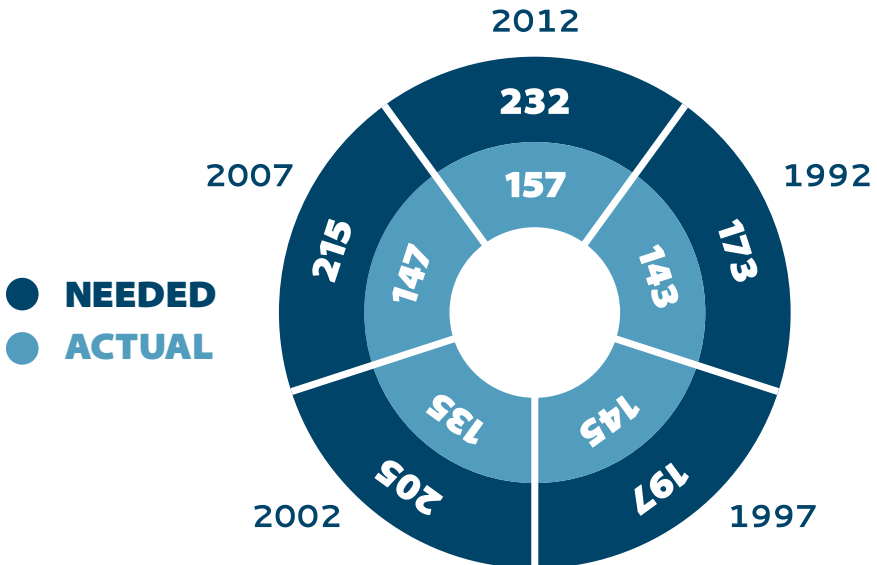
OUR COMMUNITIES



There are times when our broad experience in general surgery allows us to fulfill multiple roles in rural and isolated areas of British Columbia where some specialists are absent.

For example, in many community hospitals in B.C. we often act as the “gastroenterologist”. In smaller towns and cities, we provide essential obstetrical care for complicated deliveries by performing Caesarean sections. Frequently, we are the only providers of critical care medicine/surgery and act as the “intensive care” physician for seriously ill patients.

OUR NUMBERS



PROJECTED NEED FOR 2022 = 265 GENERAL SURGEONS

OUR FUTURE

BC currently has only 157 full-time practicing general surgeons – but should have 232 to match the Canadian average. We have the lowest number of surgical oncologists (cancer surgery specialists) per population in Canada.

As a result the average wait time for a consultation with a general surgeon has gone from 4.8 weeks in 2006 to 8 weeks today. Wait times for the surgeries we perform have increased 54% over the last 20 years.

The number of people over the age of 65 in our province is projected to increase by 45% in the next decade. The wait times will become longer without appropriate resources. General surgeons provide surgical care for breast and colorectal cancer – the most common cancers requiring surgery. With a rapidly aging population the need for general surgeons will grow exponentially.

SECTION OF GENERAL SURGERY

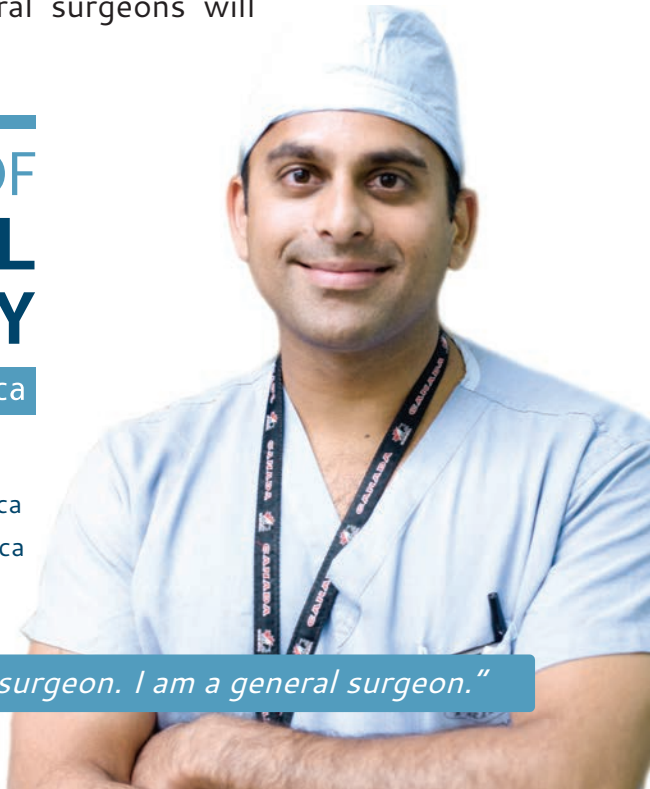
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"I am a bariatric surgeon. I am a general surgeon."