



REMEMBER
THE **D.O.**
ADVANTAGE

Osteopathic training uniquely equips the D.O. physician to pay special attention to interactions among all of your body's systems. So even those D.O.s who choose to become surgical specialists can care for you as a whole person. Your osteopathic surgeon's objective is to treat causes, not just symptoms, and that's good medicine!

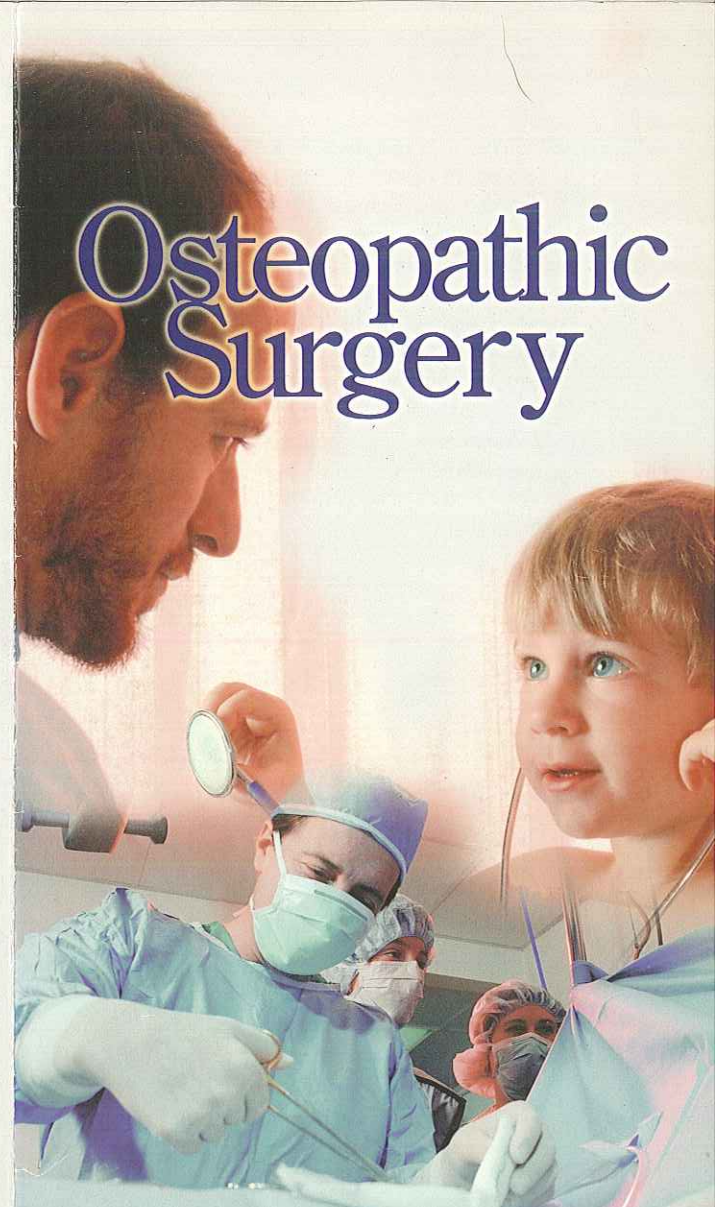
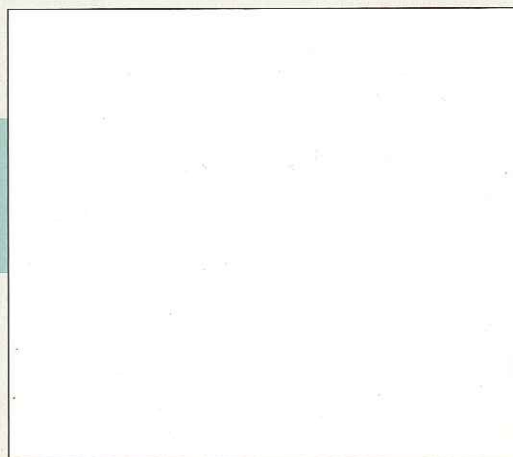


Osteopathic Surgery the **D.O.** Advantage



The American College of Osteopathic Surgeons is committed to assuring excellence in osteopathic surgical care through education, advocacy, leadership development, and the fostering of professional and personal relationships.

To learn more about osteopathic surgery and the American College of Osteopathic Surgeons, visit www.facos.org



Osteopathic Surgery

the **D.O.**
Advantage

WHAT IS AN OSTEOPATHIC PHYSICIAN – D.O.?

A doctor of osteopathic medicine (D.O.) is a fully trained and licensed physician who prescribes medications, performs surgery, and utilizes all medically accepted scientific methods to maintain and restore your health. Today's D.O. provides **comprehensive medical care**, including preventive medicine, diagnosis, appropriate use of drugs, surgery, osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT), and hospital care. And that care is provided with the *D.O. Advantage*: an emphasis on the human body as one complete system that performs best when all of the body's components function together harmoniously.

HOW DO D.O. SURGEONS CARE FOR THEIR PATIENTS?

Problems in one part of your body may cause problems in another area. Although your D.O. surgeon's primary emphasis is on surgical care and treatment, he or she has been taught how to consider your injury or illness not by itself, but in relation to its effect on the rest of your body. **Your D.O. surgeon cares for you as a whole person!**

WHAT KIND OF SURGICAL TRAINING DO D.O.S RECEIVE?

Early in training, the D.O. surgeon learns to treat the **complete patient**. He or she works closely with your primary care physician to consider all your medical needs. This approach to understanding the needs of the patient doesn't just happen. An osteopathic physician has attended an undergraduate college or university and has successfully completed four years of osteopathic medical education before receiving the Doctor of Osteopathy degree. Colleges of osteopathic medicine are accredited by the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), which is recognized for that purpose by the U.S. Department of Education.

But your osteopathic surgeon's education doesn't stop there. Following **four years of osteopathic medical school**, the D.O. physician must **complete one year of post-graduate rotations** (rotations may include experience in general internal medicine, ICU, emergency medicine, general surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, and elective rotations in surgical sub-specialties, anesthesia and radiology), and then **another four to six years of specialized training** to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to become your surgeon. There are licensed D.O. surgeons trained in all specialties of surgery including general, general vascular, neurological, gynecological, orthopedic, plastic and reconstructive, urological, cardiothoracic, ENT (ear, nose and throat), and ophthalmological. Some D.O. surgeons may pursue even further subspecialty training.

DOES MY SURGEON KEEP UP TO DATE WITH NEW ADVANCES IN SURGERY?

Yes! Professional education for the D.O. surgeon is a lifelong process to remain professionally informed in a field that is constantly advancing in care and treatment. The American College of Osteopathic Surgeons requires its members in active practice to complete at least 120 credit hours of approved continuing surgical education every three years.

WHAT IS BOARD CERTIFICATION?

In addition to educational degrees and state licensure, another indication of competence is whether a D.O. surgeon is specialty board certified.

The AOA specialty boards define the qualifications required of osteopathic physicians for certification in each specialty, determine the qualifications of osteopathic physicians who seek certification in a specialty, conduct examinations for certification, and issue certificates to those physicians who are found qualified.

A D.O. surgeon who is AOA specialty board certified has satisfactorily completed an approved program of surgical training after graduating from an accredited college of osteopathic medicine. A D.O. surgeon also must pass a written and oral examination that tests the knowledge, judgment, and skills necessary to practice a particular surgical specialty. Successful completion of these tests is designed to assure you that the D.O. surgeon has sufficient and appropriate training and has achieved the expertise to provide you with surgical care. In order to maintain their AOA board certification, D.O. surgeons must: maintain an unrestricted license to practice medicine; demonstrate continuing education in their specialty; participate in a surgical practice performance assessment; and successfully pass a proctored, closed book examination.

