

Pediatric surgeon: Healing Childhoods One Surgery at a Time

Ana Nunez

Mission Early College High School

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Ms. De La Cruz

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Abstract

Pediatric Surgeons are surgeons who specialize in minors. In this paper the basic information of the ins and outs of what pediatric surgeons do as well as what they receive back from it. Some topics discussed will be salary, hours, the schooling/experience needed, the history of pediatric surgery, as well as the exact definition of what a pediatric surgeon is.

Pediatrics Surgeon: Healing Childhoods One Surgery at a Time

Repairing damage, preventing disease, and saving lives are all things many think of when thinking about surgeons. According to Webster's online dictionary, the word surgeon means 'One who practices the art of healing by manual operation; a practitioner who treats wounds, fractures, deformities, or disorders by surgical means,' (*Surgeon, N. Meanings, Etymology and More* | *Oxford English Dictionary*, n.d.). Pediatrics, also defined by Webster's online dictionary, means 'The branch of medicine that deals with the diseases and treatment of children,' (*Pediatrics - Quick Search Results* | *Oxford English Dictionary*, n.d.). These definitions, in short, explain what a pediatric surgeon is, but it is much more than that. Being a pediatric surgeon is being part of medical teams in order to help save or better a young life.

What is a Pediatric surgeon?

According to Career One Stop, the description of the pediatric surgeon is to 'Diagnose and perform surgery to treat fetal abnormalities and congenital disabilities, diseases, and injuries in fetuses, premature and newborn infants, children, and adolescents. Includes all pediatric surgical specialties and subspecialties.' (Pediatric Surgeons, n.d., sec. Typical Wages). Pediatric surgeons are highly specialized medical professionals who perform intricate surgeries on minors, ranging from newborns to expertise, dedication, and their vital role in ensuring young patients' health and well-being.

History

Pediatric surgery has an extensive history; in its beginnings, it had high mortality rates, substantial risk of infection, and unsafe conditions. Compared to our now low mortality rate, minimal risk of infection, and sterile, safe conditions, the pediatric surgery field has come a long way. It all began after World War II; the demand for these minor-focused surgeons was high.

This is because 'Adult general surgeons doing this work were unable to fulfill the need, and since their work was only ten percent pediatrics, little attention was paid to this aspect of their practice. (Carachi et al., 2009). Three leading pioneers in pediatric surgery in the United States were Herbert Coe, a general and plastics surgeon at the Children's Orthopedic Hospital. Oswald Wyatt, the establisher of a full-time pediatric surgical practice, and William E. Ladd, often seen as the most influential of the three, for catering his practice to sick kids in the Boston Children's Hospital. Each of these surgeons trained and established hospitals to cater to children, who at the time were medically neglected. Every effort was well worth our current state of pediatric care, especially when it comes to surgery.

Schooling

Becoming a pediatric surgeon requires, at most, 15 years of rigorous Schooling and training. It usually begins with a bachelor's degree in a science-related field such as pre-med, biology, chemistry, etc. After completing a bachelor's degree, four years of medical school is necessary. After obtaining a medical degree, the graduate must complete a general surgery residency program, typically lasting five to seven years. Once the general surgery residency is completed, pediatric surgeons must complete a fellowship program in pediatric surgery, which can last an additional two to three years. Throughout their Schooling, pediatric surgeons gain firsthand experience by collaborating with experienced surgeons in various clinical settings, including hospitals and clinics. In addition to their formal education, pediatric surgeons must pass licensing exams and obtain board certification in pediatric surgery to practice professionally. This extensive training is necessary to ensure that children get treatment in optimal, safe conditions.

Hours

Pediatric surgeons in the United States tend to work long and demanding hours due to their profession. Pediatric surgeons must be available 24/7 just in case there's an emergency like crashes, fires, or any other catastrophes, and perform surgeries on patients. A pediatric surgeon's workweek can be at most 80 hours, with irregular schedules, including early mornings, late nights, and weekends. The unpredictable and chaotic hours a pediatric surgeon means that surgeons must be ready to respond to urgent cases at any time. Moreover, improving the life of their young motivates them to maintain rigorous schedules to provide the best possible care for their patients.

Salary

As previously stated, surgeons have an extremely demanding schooling and experience regiment. Due to the demanding nature of their work and the years of extensive training required, pediatric surgeons are among the highest-paid professionals in the medical field. On average, pediatric surgeons in the United States earn 239,200. However, salary can range from \$80,890 on the low end and up to \$239,200 and upwards on the high end per year, depending on factors such as experience and location (Pediatric Surgeons, n.d., sec. Typical Wages). In addition to base salaries, pediatric surgeons may receive many bonuses, benefits, and opportunities to advance in their field. The pay for pediatric surgeons reflects not only their specialized skill set and the critical nature of the care they provide but also the long hours and prominent level of responsibility inherent in their profession, making every penny these surgeons earn worth their work.

Job Availability

Job availability for pediatric surgeons can vary depending on location, the needs of hospitals in an area, and the demand for pediatric surgical services. Pediatric surgeons are in high demand due to their expertise in treating minors. However, job opportunities may be more concentrated in urban areas since there's a higher population in those areas. There is a consistent need for pediatric surgeons across a wide range of healthcare settings, including children's hospitals, medical centers, and private practices. As the population continues to grow and pediatric surgery advances, the demand for pediatric surgeons is expected to increase. However, the supply of pediatric surgeons is also steadily increasing, making the opportunity to become a pediatric surgeon a less ample career option (Pediatric Surgeons Career Video, n.d., sec. Career Outlook).

Conclusion

In conclusion, pediatric surgeons are essential to saving minors' lives. With every successful surgery accomplished, they save a childhood. They are compensated for their extensive training, schooling, and chaotic work hours with a high salary and the complementary smile on a child's face after their life is saved. Surgeons are heroes.

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