Surgery is a branch of medicine concerned with treating diseases and injuries by means of operative intervention, which means a surgeon operates on a patient in order to treat an injury, improve the functions of the body or the patient's appearance.

The word 'surgery' originally comes from Greek, in which language it means 'hand work'. This is actually a very adequate name, as a lot of procedures are performed in an operating room manually, with the use of modern tools and medical devices.

Let's have a look at some of the common types of surgeries, circumstances when surgeries are necessary, the professionals involved in them and the equipment used. When there has been a traffic accident and an injured person is brought to the hospital's A&E department, emergency surgery might be required, i.e. one which has not been planned and arranged by the hospital's staff. The patient is usually rushed into the operating room where doctors perform the surgery.

Before doctors begin the operation, they have to scrub up and make sure that the tools & equipment used are sterile. If necessary, drains are placed to remove blood from wounds. After the surgery has finished, a suture is applied to hold tissues and skin together and the patient is taken to the recovery room where his or her health is monitored.

Most kinds surgery are known as reconstructive surgery, because by means of an operation, surgeons attempt to restore the anatomy, function or appearance of the body. For instance, the aim of the work of an orthopedic surgeon is to restore the functions of injured bones or muscles, whereas of a vascular surgeon is to treat the conditions of arteries and veins. Neurosurgery, on the other hand, involves those surgical procedures that are carried out in order to treat the disorders affecting constituents of a human nervous system, for example the brain, spinal cord or nerves.

The saying 'fine feathers make fine birds' is taking on significance nowadays and the way we look is at least as important as what we say or do, so cosmetic surgery is becoming more and more popular. People decide to undergo this type of surgery if they want the appearance of a particular body part, e.g. the nose, ear or breast, to be improved. This type of surgery is always planned, so there is some prepping to be done before, for example arranging time off work for the operation and recovery. In most cases local anesthesia is used before the operation. An anesthesiologist will administer a drug to suppress the feeling of pain. As the drug is normally liquid, this may be done using a syringe. Firstly the physician disinfects the patients' skin with an alcohol swab, then aspirates the necessary amount of the liquid and injects it into the body part which the surgeon will operate on. If the surgery is effective, it will not only make the patient look better, but also might boost their self-esteem and allow them to lead a happier life.

So far we have classified surgery types according to the function. However, they can also be classified on the basis of the way an operation is carried out. Keyhole surgery, for example, which is also called laparoscopic surgery, is a modern technique in which
operations are performed through small incisions. To magnify the surgical elements and provide aid during the operation, images from inside the body are displayed on monitor screens. On the other hand, its opposite - laparotomy - involves making a large incision through the abdominal wall.

Because of dynamic technological development, surgery - perceived as a branch of medicine - is constantly developing. Surgeons use more and more advanced equipment and what was once thought to be impossible, nowadays can be done. To stay up to date, browse professional journals, read explanatory articles and watch documentaries, both on TV and online.

**Discussion Questions**

Can you explain the function of one chosen surgery type which is described in the article?

Would you agree or disagree that "Cosmetic surgery serves only the needs of the vain"? Why?

Have you heard of any modern and groundbreaking surgical technique or equipment? What can you say about it?