

The Breast Surgery Movement: A 50 Year Development of the Surgical Specialty

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Abstract : The surgical treatment of breast cancer has rapidly evolved over the past 50 years, progressing from Halsted's radical mastectomy to a public campaign of surgical options, aesthetic reconstruction, and patient empowerment. This article examines the happenings that led to the transition of breast surgery as a subset of general surgery to its own specialized field. Sparked by the research of Dr. Bernard Fisher and the first National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project trial in 1971, the field of breast surgery underwent significant growth over the next several decades, enabling general surgeons to limit their practices to the breast. High surgical volumes eventually led to the development of the first formal breast surgical oncology fellowship in a large community-based hospital at Baylor University Medical Center in 1982. The establishment of the American Society of Breast Surgeons, as well several landmark clinical trials and public campaign efforts, further contributed to the advancement of breast surgery, making it the specialized field of the current era.

Keywords : breast cancer, breast fellowship, breast surgery, surgical history

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