



Robert Salter, MD

As Chief of Orthopedic Surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, and later as Surgeon-in-Chief, Dr. Robert Salter was a leader and innovator in orthopedics for over 40 years, publishing widely on many aspects of bone disease and repair. In 1960 he developed an operation for hip dislocation in children which is used worldwide and is known as the "Salter Operation". Furthermore, his innovative research related to the musculoskeletal system has contributed immeasurably to the understanding and prevention of degenerative arthritis, among other musculoskeletal disorders.

Salter graduated in medicine from the University of Toronto in 1947. Following two years spent at the Grenfell Medical Mission in Newfoundland and Labrador, Dr. Salter returned to Toronto and the Hospital for Sick Children where he came under the influence of pediatric cardiovascular surgeon Dr. William Mustard.

He is the author of a major textbook in orthopedic surgery, titled "Disorders and Injuries of the Musculoskeletal System", first published in 1970. In addition to the introduction of numerous innovative orthopedic treatments, he recognized the therapeutic effectiveness of "continuous passive motion" to the repair of cartilage injuries. A significant application of this concept was to the understanding of osteoarthritis, a degenerative joint disease that commonly occurs after physical trauma. Through his research, Dr. Salter demonstrated that continuous motion after surgery stimulated the formation of new cartilage, ultimately facilitating joints to heal properly and significantly reducing the likelihood of the patient developing arthritis. This ground breaking discovery was influential in changing the treatment and care of orthopedic surgery patients and in the prevention of degenerative arthritis due to surgical trauma. Beyond this, the concept of "continuous passive motion" has been translated into numerous clinical applications throughout the world and has had a profound effect on the understanding and treatment of various musculoskeletal disorders and injuries. Today, Dr. Salter is recognized as a world renowned surgeon, teacher and scientist.