

ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY

Bones and Joints

What is Orthopedic Surgery?

Orthopedic surgeons help people with problems in their bones and joints. They can also take care of broken bones with casts and splints, do joint injections, and recommend other treatments such as medicine or physical therapy.

Their surgical instruments look more like tools you might have in your garage: drills, saws, screws, and bolts. They can examine people, look at x-rays and MRIs, diagnose problems, and decide how to best treat them.

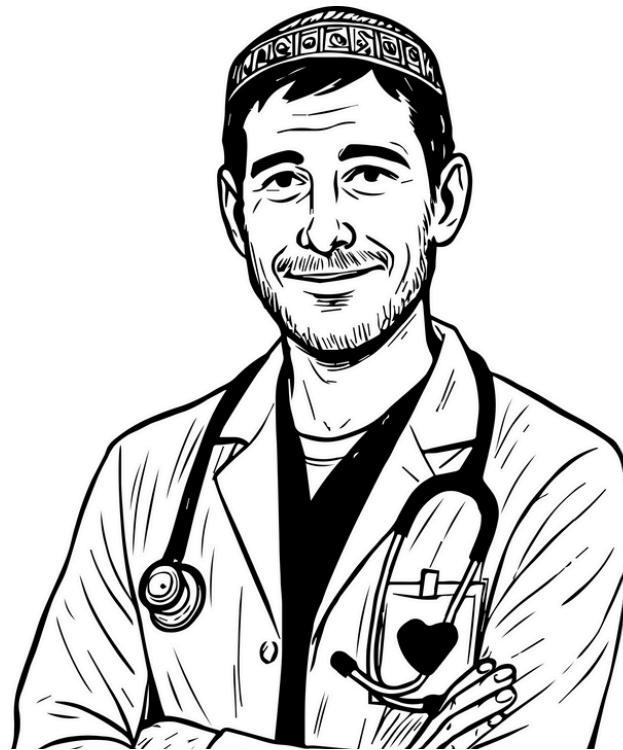
Diseases and Conditions

Lots of things can go wrong with bones and joints. Some are acute (happen suddenly) like a broken bone. Others are chronic (happen over a long time) like arthritis, when a joint gets worn out and painful.

Some problems get better with treatments like splints, braces, casts, injections, or physical therapy. They do surgery for damage that needs to be repaired, loose or rough places in a joint that need to be tidied up, or a joint that needs to be replaced.

Daily Work Life

Orthopedic surgeons usually have two different kinds of days: OR days and clinic days. On Operating Room (OR) days, they do surgeries one after another. On clinic days they see people who don't need surgery, people who do need surgery, and people who have already had surgery.



Years of Training in the U.S.

- 4 years college, 4 years medical school, 5 years orthopedic surgery residency
- optional: 1 year fellowship in pediatric orthopedics, orthopedic oncology, reconstructive surgery, sports medicine, hand, foot, ankle, or spine

Necessary skills:

- Excellent visual-spatial reasoning
- Steady hands and precise hand-eye coordination
- Good stamina and strength to work through long surgeries