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When searching for a surgeon, look for the letters F-A-C-S

By Patricia L. Turner, MD, MBA, FACS, Executive Director & CEO, American College of Surgeons

When you or a loved one is scheduled to undergo a surgical procedure, you desire confidence that your surgeon is highly skilled, well-trained and prepared to deliver the highest quality care.

Surgery may feel overwhelming, regardless of age or health status. With so many factors to consider, one reliable method to inspire confidence is to select a surgeon with the letters F-A-C-S after their name. This designation means that the surgeon is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, the largest surgical organization in the world. The ACS has, for more than one hundred years, set the standards for high-quality surgical care.

What does FACS mean?

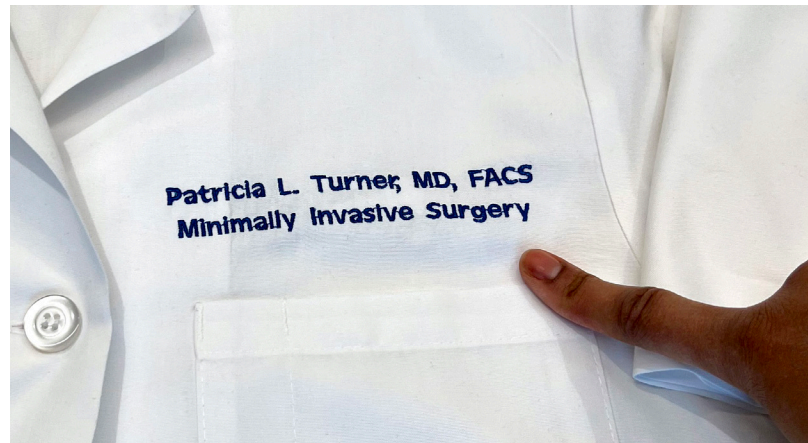
Earning the FACS designation involves a rigorous application process, verification of credentials, review of a surgical case log, recommendations by colleagues, and interviews conducted by a panel of experts. These steps ensure that surgeons meet and uphold the highest standards of surgical care and ethics.

By choosing a Fellow of the ACS, you are selecting a surgeon who meets and exceeds standard qualifications, such as board certification. The FACS designation is a higher bar.

Who are the Fellows of the ACS?

The ACS currently has more than 93,000 members worldwide. Fellows provide care in settings ranging from small rural clinics to large academic medical centers. Fellows of the ACS are also represented throughout all of the surgical specialties.

Fellows have reached many milestones in surgery, both past and present, and been at the forefront of medical breakthroughs for more than 100 years. In 1935, Columbia University surgeon Allen Whipple, MD, FACS, was the first American to perform a complex operation for treating pancreatic cancer — a procedure that bears his name today. Alton Ochsner, MD, FACS, made the first link between tobacco and lung cancer — in 1939. Cardiac surgeon Bartley P. Griffith, MD, FACS, performed the first successful pig-to-human heart transplant in the world in 2022. The bottom



line is that Fellows of the College make it a point to stay at the head of the class so that they can provide their patients with the best possible care.

Why does the FACS designation matter?

Providing high-quality surgical care for our patients has been the focus of the American College of Surgeons since our founding in 1913, and this prioritization continues today. From surgical education and research to patient access, hospital standardization and clinical care, the ACS has remained a global leader in advancing the field of surgery.

When you see FACS after a surgeon's name, those four letters represent the gold standard in surgical quality. FACS indicates that the surgeon's education and training, professional qualifications, surgical competence and ethical conduct meet the high standards established by the American College of Surgeons.

When you prepare for surgery, one of your questions should be "Is my surgeon a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons?"

Visit www.facs.org to find a Fellow the next time you need surgical care.

Patricia L. Turner is the Executive Director & CEO of the American College of Surgeons, the largest professional association of surgeons in the world, founded in 1913.

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