Jewell Osterholm: Sharing Fifty Years of Insight

Tony Anene-Maidoh, MS¹, Mitchell Maltenfort, PhD²

¹Jefferson Medical College, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA
²Department of Neurological Surgery, Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, PA

Sample of articles published in 1957

Twenty years of Leucotomy


Jewell L. Osterholm was appointed Professor and Chairman of the Department of Neurosurgery in 1974, and left the Chairmanship in 1994. Recently, he gave a series of workshops on performing neurological examinations. These workshops are being archived on DVD so future residents can benefit from Dr. Osterholm’s training. The emphasis is on interviewing and observing the patient; the only specialized devices used are the stethoscope and the reflex hammer.

Dr. Osterholm received his MD from Washington University School of Medicine in 1957, and his postgraduate training in neuropathology, neurology, and neurosurgery at the Montreal Neurologic Institute of McGill University. He came to Philadelphia in 1963, when he joined the neurosurgical service at Hahnemann Medical College; he became director of the Division of Neurological Surgery in 1967. He was responsible for the residency training program, spinal cord injury center, and neurosurgical research laboratories. He became chair of the Jefferson Department of Neurosurgery in 1974, as an experienced administrator with an active research program and a large surgical practice. By 1980, the Jefferson neurosurgical program provided more than 1,300 major neurosurgical operations yearly.

Residency training in both Neurosurgery and Neurology was enhanced in 1982, when an admitting arrangement was developed between these two departments to provide wider sharing of neurosurgical patients and a broader diagnostic workup. Neurosurgical residents received greater exposure to the basic neurosciences, neuroradiology, neuropathology, pediatric neurosurgery, and laboratory techniques. Resident attendance at various local and national conferences became routine. When asked about his star pupils Dr. Osterholm said “You can teach anyone to be a good neurosurgeon, but you need to be a natural with your hands to be great”.

One of the biggest achievements during Dr. Osterholm’s tenure was the establishment of the Regional Spinal Cord Injury Center of
Dr. Osterholm's Bibliography


Damage to Cranial Nerve III (the oculomotor nerve) affects the ability of the eyes to focus on an object or to react to changes in light.

Graphic: http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cranial_nerve_III_visceral.svg
Patrick J. Lynch, medical illustrator; C. Carl Jaffe, MD, cardiologist