

Abu al-Qasim al-Zahrawi

“Father of Surgery”



Abu al-Qasim al-Zahrawi was a man of many talents. He was an Arab-Muslim physician, also known in the West as Albucasis; his Latin name. He was born during 936 CE, descended from the Ansar tribe of Arabia which was established earlier in Spain. Although he had a long, rich and successful career in medicine, he sadly died in the 1013 CE. This talented man was also part of a group of 3 Muslim scientists, along with Al-Razi and Ibn Sina. They were within the most famous people who have worked in medicine throughout the pre-modern times.

During his profession in medicine, he invented a majority of tools used in surgery, some of which are still used today in our modern hospitals! There was a tool used for internal examination of your ears, and a copper spoon used as a medical tool to press down your tongue. He also invented a device for removing foreign bodies from your throat! As well as inventing tools, he used them to carry out operations himself. Albucasis used catgut (which is from the gut of animals), because it was “perfect for stitching internal wounds”. Surgeons are still using this today! He was a physician to King Al-Hakam-II of Spain. This shows he was a trusted man; to be able to handle the lives of royalty. He also specialized in curing diseases.

In addition to Abu al-Qasim al-Zahrawi’s life he wrote a Medical Encyclopaedia called “Al-Tasrif”, including an estimated 50 years of medical practice and experience; separated into 30 volumes. There are 3 whole books on surgery and has details of various surgical treatment performed by himself – the dissection of animals, midwifery, surgery of eye, ear and throat, and lots more! All of his books also contain a lot of diagrams and illustrations of surgical instruments, which were invented by him. They also embrace instructions for preparation of different medicines.

This man, the “Father of Surgery” was the starting point to which more advanced tools and techniques were developed to be used in surgery to this day.

Now that’s what I call **INGENIOUS!**

By Jamilah