The thyroidectomy story: comic books, graphic novels, and the novel approach to teaching head and neck surgery through the genre of the comic book.

As surgical education changes, an instructive need arises to complement the complexity of hands-on manual and visuospatial skills acquired as a result of apprenticing in the operating room (OR) and adjusting to new technologies and robotics. Novel and innovative methods must be employed, not to replace the OR experience but rather to enhance it. Here, we present a fine arts merger with surgical education in the genre of the comic book and graphic novel to address visuospatial skills, motor skills (practice-based learning and improvement), and the narrative, humanistic component (patient care) necessary for a well-rounded surgical education. We examine the important goals of training residents with the development of an “experimental” comic book on the
thyroidectomy procedure to enhance textbook and lecture material, where residents and nurses are introduced to technique, narrative, and medical illustration skills (interpersonal communication skills) to assist them in anticipating, reflecting, and potentially facilitating the very proficiency necessary to be successful in the OR while remaining curious and engaged in their craft.

Competencies

Patient Care; Medical Knowledge; Interpersonal and Communication Skills; Practice-Based Learning and Improvement

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