

Otolaryngology – A Journey

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The speciality of otolaryngology has begun in the early 20th century, before which, the field of otology and laryngology were separate. Otologists were surgeons while laryngologists were physicians who treated diseases of Ear, Nose and Throat. The first clinics of both otology and laryngology were founded in Vienna in 1870's. Since then there has been a massive expansion in our knowledge about the complex anatomy and hence a better understanding and ability to treat the diseases of ear, nose and throat. The 20th century marks the turning point, with the technological advancement, discovery of antibiotics and better anaesthetic drugs and techniques. The otolaryngologists treat a multitude of diseases ranging from simple nasal allergies to complex resections and reconstructions of malignancies of head and neck region.

In the last 5-7 decades there has been a paradigm shift in the spectrum of otolaryngology with the advent of fibre optics (in 1950's) and the beginning of the era of endoscopy. Though the significance of open surgeries cannot be completely disregarded, the new endoscopic approaches especially for nose, para-nasal and nasopharyngeal pathologies have un – paralleled reduction in morbidity. The rapidly expanding speciality of otolaryngology has now evolved into sub specialities like – rhinology, otology, head and neck surgery, skull base surgery, neurotology, laryngology. Advances in instrumentation, improved diagnostic support, and computer aided surgery with the possibility of intro-op navigation have helped us conquer areas which were earlier considered beyond the scope. With the fast paced development of technology and advances in newer techniques, it is imperative to keep abreast of the latest developments. Albeit what needs to be stressed, is the necessity to test and judge, these new treatment possibilities, equipment and techniques before incorporating in routine practise.

There are few specialities which have flourished as strikingly as otolaryngology in the past few decades. This field has incorporated a new breakthrough every decade and is only progressing further into new frontiers. In today's era of fast paced medicine, a skilled otolaryngologist can offer his patient a wide range of expertise in the diagnosis and treatment.

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Our endeavour at Acta scientific Otolaryngology is to present the latest and best in the field of otolaryngology. It is with immense pleasure that I present to you our 3rd issue. Finally I thank all the authors for sharing their information on this forum which will help in further development of patient care.

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