

The state of coloproctology in Egypt

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Egypt is one of the oldest civilizations ever known, its writings and monuments date back to more than 3000 years B.C. It lies in the upper right corner of Africa connecting it with Asia through Sinai, Also connecting the Mediterranean and the red seas through Suez Canal.

Egypt was the land of many cultures and civilizations that enriched the human knowledge as a whole and medicine in particular. Pharaonic and Islamic cultures are the best examples for that.

The medicine of the ancient Egyptians is some of the oldest documented. From the beginnings of the civilization in the late fourth millennium BC until the Persian invasion of 525 BC, The oldest metal surgical tools in the world were discovered in the tomb of Qar.

The extensive use of surgery, mummification practices, and autopsy as a religious exercise gave Egyptians a vast knowledge of the body's morphology, and even a considerable understanding of organ functions.

After Islam entrance, Egypt saw its first hospital "el-Kanadil" in the seventh century and it was near Amr Ibn el-As mosque.

Recent excavations revealed a large number of surgical tools which are considered the first and earliest known of their kind. These excavated tools are attributed to the late Ommyad and Abbasid periods in Egypt. These instruments bear much resemblance to the ancient Egyptians' surgical tools and to those pictured on the walls of the "Kom-ombo" temple in Upper Egypt. The presence of these tools in the Egyptian soil proves the presence of a great progress in surgery during the early Muslim reign of Egypt. Among the excavated tools, there are various types of cauteries, surgical needles, trocars, hooks, pincers, forceps, scissors, tweezers, osteotomes, tongue depressors, ear cones. In this paper forty five pieces were studied and illustrated.

In modern Egypt, Qasr el Ayni hospital was built in 1827 and later it became the faculty of medicine of Cairo University.

Regarding coloproctology in my hospital, it's only related to cancer as it's an oncology center. We are dealing with a large number of colon and rectum cancer cases as a referral center from most of the governorates of the delta and northern Egypt, offering them; surgeries, neoadjuvant and adjuvant therapies.

When it comes to cancer, the situation in Egypt is not so clear. There are impressive advances on some levels and disappointing aspects on the other hands.

This discrepancy may be due to the lack of a clear medical system, as there are the university hospitals and the ministry of health hospitals with little coordination between these two arms.

In oncology Center Mansoura University, we are still dealing with all cancer cases with no clear subspecialties but many attempts are going on now to have such units to be able to serve patients in the correct way.

In our hospital, many young doctors have travelled abroad to Europe mainly on national grants, some of them in the coloproctology field and returned to spread what they have learned. Now, in addition to open techniques, laparoscopy plays a major role in dealing with colorectal cancer cases. Also new techniques as TaTME are used with indicated cases.

Some problems are still facing us, not on the technical level, but with other levels that are as important as the surgeries themselves; such as registration on a national level to be able to get accurate data, also we are still lacking a national early screening program for colorectal cancer which would help in dealing with cases and to get better results.