

MAKE A DIFFERENCE

BECOME A CARDIOTHORACIC SURGEON

Heart disease and lung cancer are the top two causes of death within the United States. Cardiothoracic surgeons, who treat these killer diseases, can make a profound difference in the world by improving the life expectancy and quality of life for thousands of patients throughout their careers. From the thrill of working on a beating heart to being on the cutting edge of the latest robotic and minimally invasive technology, cardiothoracic surgeons are never bored. Few professionals in any walk of life experience both the excitement and the rewards of cardiothoracic surgery.

Cardiothoracic surgeons are specialists in the surgical management of disorders of the heart, lungs, esophagus, and major blood vessels of the chest. They provide expert, state-of-the-art care that is life-saving, challenging, and complex. Subspecialties include: adult and congenital heart surgery, along with general thoracic surgery, which addresses disorders of the lungs, esophagus, and chest.



PREPARATION FOR CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

The educational path to cardiothoracic surgery now involves a number of innovative and exciting options. Many students decide to enter the field in medical school, others during general surgery training. The following cardiothoracic training options are available.

- Six-year integrated program (applications to an integrated residency program are due during a student's senior year of medical school)
- Five years general surgery, two years cardiothoracic surgery
- Five years general surgery, three years cardiothoracic surgery
- Four years general surgery, three years cardiothoracic surgery

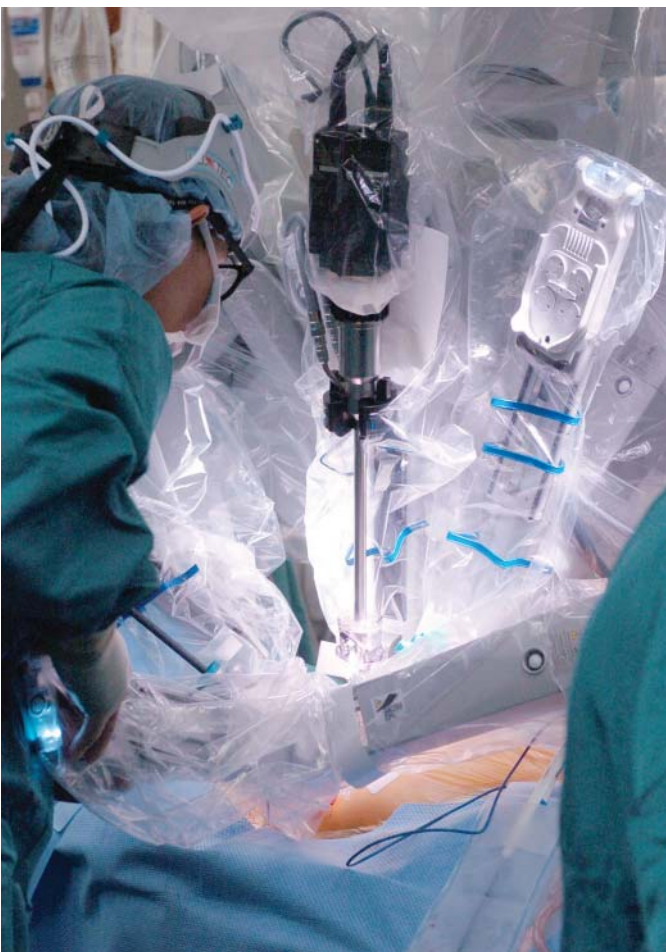
CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Cardiothoracic surgery is a technically demanding specialty that is constantly evolving with new procedures, new approaches, and improving results. In addition to the joy and privilege of caring for others, there are multiple career opportunities, including university professorship and teaching, private practice, research, and clinical care. Each of these fields offers rewards in terms of a stimulating career with the potential to save lives, improve the quality of life for patients, earn generous compensation and enjoy a comfortable lifestyle, and make important contributions to research that can earn the respect of colleagues and the public alike.

BECOME A CARDIOTHORACIC SURGEON

“Never do I regret having chosen cardiothoracic surgery. I have enjoyed a long, satisfying career in this specialty. Today, I would select it even more readily if given a chance to start over. ”

DENTON A. COOLEY, MD
THE TEXAS HEART INSTITUTE, HOUSTON, TX



The Society of Thoracic Surgeons is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 5,800 surgeons, researchers, and allied health professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible outcomes for heart, lung, esophageal and other surgical procedures for the chest. Founded in 1964, the mission of STS is to enhance the ability of cardiothoracic surgeons to provide the highest quality patient care through education, research, and advocacy.

THE FUTURE OF CARDIOTHORACIC SURGERY

New techniques for the treatment of heart and lung diseases are constantly evolving; these new, increasingly high-tech techniques help cardiothoracic surgeons operate on sicker patients with more co-morbidities yet continue to achieve improved outcomes. As Baby Boomers age, cardiothoracic surgical procedures for

heart disease and thoracic cancer will continue to be necessary, thus increasing the need for cardiothoracic surgeons. With more than 50 percent of the currently active 4,500 U.S. cardiothoracic surgeons expected to retire within the next decade, the best and brightest young surgeons are required to fill those positions.

LEARN MORE ABOUT BECOMING A CARDIOTHORACIC SURGEON

For additional information on cardiothoracic surgery, visit The Society of Thoracic Surgeons' Web site at www.sts.org, where you can view a video featuring cardiothoracic surgeons discussing the specialty. General surgery and cardiothoracic surgery program directors are also knowledgeable about cardiothoracic surgical training programs and the requirements for Board certification. Current cardiothoracic surgery residents can offer a wealth of information about their experiences and future plans. In addition, do not hesitate to discuss your career plans

with practicing cardiothoracic surgeons. They can provide invaluable information concerning the joy and satisfaction of this very exciting surgical specialty. If you would like to e-mail a question to a practicing cardiothoracic surgeon, please forward your request to residents@sts.org.

For additional useful information concerning training, visit the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (www.acgme.org), the Thoracic Surgery Residents Association (www.tsrnet.org), or The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (www.sts.org).