César Roux and his Roux-Y Anastomosis: 130 Years of History

Rodrigo Castaño-Llano,1 Santiago Salazar-Ochoa.2*


Keywords: Anastomosis, Roux en Y, Gastrointestinal Surgical Procedures, Gastrointestinal Tract, History of Medicine.

1 Professor of the Gastrohepatology Group, Universidad de Antioquia. Gastrointestinal Surgery and Endoscopy, Instituto de Cancerología, Clínica Las Américas; Medellín, Colombia.

2 General Surgery Resident, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana; Medellín, Colombia.

*Correspondence: Santiago Salazar-Ochoa. santiago.salazar.ochoa1190@gmail.com

Received: 20/05/2022
Accepted: 23/05/2022

The discovery, implementation, and development of asepsis, antisepsis, and anesthesia techniques allowed, coupled with the development of formal and better-structured programs and training in medicine and surgery, accessing body cavities considered inscrutable temples in the human being, such as the abdomen and the skull. Since then, and historically, there have been notable characters in the world of surgery, not only for their intellectual abilities that gave them a superior understanding of the human body in their time but also for their manual skills that led them to transcend in the history of surgery. One of these characters is César Roux, inventor and precursor of the surgery that bears his name: L’anse en Y selon Roux or Roux-en-Y anastomosis (Figure 1).


César Roux was born on March 23, 1857, in Mont-la-Ville, Switzerland. He was the fifth of eleven children, and his father was a school inspector. He studied medicine at the
University of Bern between 1874 and 1880, a university whose faculty included Theodor Langhans in pathology and Theodor Kocher in surgery. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern. He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.

The first performance of a Roux-en-Y gastrointestinal reconstruction in a human was performed in 1892 as a treatment for anthropyloric obstruction, a general pathology that concerned and occupied the minds of great surgeons of the time, such as Theodor Billroth. It was under the mentorship of Theodor Kocher that Roux undertook further training in surgery for three years at the University Hospital of Bern.

He was early noted for his surgical skills that would bring him recognition in the scientific community of the time and would later lead him, at the age of 30, to be the chief of surgery at the Canton Hospital in Lausanne, Switzerland. Although his interest in surgery encompassed many areas, Roux had a particular interest in gastrointestinal surgery, and his contributions in this area were the most representative.
of Charles Mayo. Thanks to his tireless work and dedication to teaching and the welfare of his patients, César Roux enjoyed great prestige in Europe and was a prominent member of some of the most critical medical societies of the time, such as the Paris Surgical Society and the St. Petersburg Military Medical Academy; besides, he received several recognitions and awards throughout his career as a surgeon.

Personally, different nuances of his character are described: a good sense of humor, but sometimes a strong temperament, an excellent vocation for work, and an outstanding commitment to his patients’ care. Harvey Cushing, who visited Lausanne in October 1900, describes him as “…a diamond in the rough who has worked his way into one of the best clinics in Switzerland. It is wonderful to see.”

In 1934, after returning to private practice, Roux died suddenly in his office; Switzerland declared national mourning. Roux left a surgical legacy that has endured for more than a century.

REFERENCES