



MAYO SCISSORS

Written by: Dr Chris de Gara

Mayo scissors make up **the corner stone of most surgical trays**. There are three types of Mayo scissors having semi-blunt ends, a feature that distinguishes them from most other surgical scissors. Straight-bladed scissors are designed for cutting body tissues near the surface of a wound or for cutting sutures. Curved-bladed scissors allow deeper dissection and is used to cut thick tissues such as those found in the uterus, muscles, and breast. Mayo scissors used for dissection are placed in tissue with their tips closed. The scissors are then opened so that the tips open and spread out the tissue during the dissection process. They **fit comfortably in the palm** and feel **reassuringly stable** with the ability to be both precise and powerful.



William James Mayo (1861 – 1939) was a physician and surgeon in the United States and **one of the seven founders of the Mayo Clinic**. He and his brother, Charles Horace Mayo, both joined their father's private medical practice in Rochester, Minnesota, US, after graduating from medical school in the 1880s. In 1919, that practice became the not-for-profit Mayo Clinic. As a child, William and his brother Charles **frequently accompanied their father as he went about his business as a pioneer physician**.

They began by helping with very menial tasks and were gradually given more responsibility. Eventually, the boys were administering anesthesia and tying off blood vessels. Mayo graduated from the University of Michigan Medical School in 1883. Afterwards he returned to Rochester to practice medicine alongside his father and his brother Charles. On August 21, 1883, a tornado struck Rochester, killing 29 people, and seriously injuring over 55 others. Relief efforts began immediately with a temporary hospital being established at the town's dance hall. The Mayo brothers were involved in treating the injured.

After the crisis had subsided, Mother Alfred Moes approached William Mayo about establishing a hospital in Rochester. On September 30, 1889, Saint Mary's Hospital opened. His father, then 70 years old, became the consulting physician and surgeon at the hospital, and his two sons began seeing patients and performing surgery with the assistance of the Sisters of Saint Francis. **During World War I, the Mayo Clinic continued to be busy**. Many draftees were examined, and war training classes were conducted for new physicians in the medical corps. This schedule took a toll on their health; Charles contracted pneumonia during one of his stints in Washington, and William developed hepatitis while in Rochester in 1918. He died in July 1939 of gastric cancer in Rochester.