

Hand and Microsurgery fellowship in the most liveable city in the world

Vancouver

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The City

Vancouver is located on the southwest coast of Canada and surrounded by a stunning combination of mountains, water and countless islands in arguably one of the most beautiful areas in the world: British Columbia. It has endless opportunities for outdoor activities on water and land, many only minutes away from the downtown core. The approximately 650.000 'Vancouverites' are very friendly and love their city, it's stunning natural surroundings and the relaxed lifestyle

The Hospitals

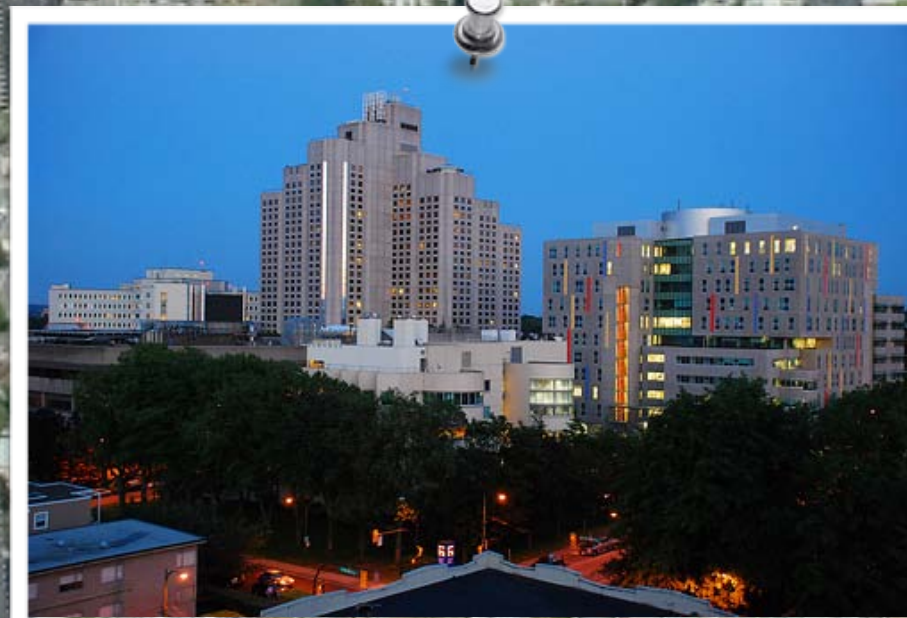
The Division of Plastic Surgery offers 4 different fellowships (hand/micro, breast, pediatric and craniofacial) and of the approximately 40 Plastic Surgeons related to the Division, 7 are actively involved in the hand and micro fellowship. The fellowship activities are mainly based in Vancouver General Hospital, the 2nd largest hospital in Canada (~8000 employees, 21 OR's & 800 beds) which serves the entire province of British Columbia (almost twice the size of Spain) for specialist and subspecialist care and tertiary referrals which results in 40% of the patients being from outside Vancouver. Other hospitals included in the fellowship are St Paul Hospital (downtown), UBC hospital (beautifully located on the UBC campus), BC Childrens Hospital and Mount St Joseph Hospital, all located within a 15 minute drive.

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Palmar tablesaw injury with segmental median nerve loss. Reconstruction with fasciocutaneous lateral arm flap including vascularized segment of posteroantibrachial cutaneous nerve to reconstruct median nerve defect



Vancouver General Hospital

The Fellowship

The hand and microsurgery fellowship is characterized by exposure to a broad spectrum of hand and wrist surgery procedures as well as many forms of microsurgical reconstruction including post-traumatic, post-oncologic and general reconstruction of the upper & lower limb, trunk and head / neck.

Besides exposure to fairly 'routine' pathology such as Dupuytren's disease, hand fractures, flexor and extensor tendon injuries and nerve injuries it can also provide exposure to the surgical treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, various wrist surgery procedures, congenital hand surgery, complex peripheral nerve pathology including brachial plexus injury (adult and pediatric), tendon transfers for tetraplegia, including toe to thumb / hand reconstruction and trauma. The latter was very well represented in the fellowship. This is facilitated both by the availability of a Plastic Surgery trauma room 7 days a week as well as the previously mentioned central and tertiary referral function of Vancouver General Hospital. Trauma cases encountered during my fellowship varied from an abundance of hand fractures and tendon/nerve injuries to multi digit replantations, severe crush injuries and gunshot wounds.

The fellowship provides hands-on experience and a key part is the extensive 'freedom' to choose which procedures you want to join and which pathology you are interested in seeing. This requires a pro-active attitude but also provides an optimal learning experience that the fellow can tailor towards his own interests and learning goals, facilitated by the willingness of all the participating surgeons.

Finally, the Division's residency program provides extensive teaching (rounds, seminars, journal clubs) all of which is accessible to the fellows.

