

Jacques Himpens, MD, PhD is a clinical professor of surgery associated with the Université Libre de Bruxelles and chief of bariatric surgery at the CHIREC Delta hospital, Brussels, Belgium.

Born February 15, 1953, he graduated as MD cum laude from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium in 1977 and trained at the surgery department of the same Leuven university hospitals (1977-1982). He passed his surgical boards with the Belgian public health office in 1984.

After passing the Visa Qualifying Examination to qualify for medical practice in the US (ECFMG certificate 1981), he benefited from additional training with special focus on intensive care at the New York Medical College and affiliated hospitals from 1982 through 1984.

While in New York he was involved with research on hypovolemic shock, which in 1984 resulted in the design of an indwelling oncometer catheter that obtained a worldwide patent.

After 7 years in surgical private practice in Gent, Belgium (1985-1992), he joined the "Université Libre de Bruxelles" and became an attending surgeon in the gastro-intestinal surgical department at the St Pierre University Hospital, Brussels under the leadership of Guy-Bernard Cadière. He assisted professor Cadière when he performed the world's first laparoscopic adjustable band gastroplasty (LAGB) in October 1992.

Starting in 1993, Dr Himpens combined his academic career with a private practice at the St Blasius Hospital at Dendermonde, Belgium, where on March 3, 1997 he performed the world's first "robotic" procedure, which consisted of a laparoscopic cholecystectomy with the Intuitive Surgery "Mona" prototype. Later on, he remained personally actively involved with the first developments of "robotic" surgery and performed numerous "robotic" procedures such as Nissen fundoplication, lysis of adhesions, lumbar sympathectomy, inguinal hernia repair, intrarectal procedures and some adjustable band gastroplasties.

He founded the bariatric unit at the St Blasius Hospital in 1999 and at the Edith Cavell Hospitals (CHIREC) at Brussels, Belgium in 2004.

After having personally performed some 1000 LAGB procedures he performed the first laparoscopic gastric bypass in Belgium in 1999 and the first laparoscopic sleeve gastrectomy, followed by the first biliopancreatic diversion with duodenal switch, both in 2001. Starting 2003, he and his team at the St Blasius Hospital and the Edith Cavell hospital performed close to 2000 laparoscopic bariatric procedures a year, including all "classic" bariatric procedures according to an empirical algorithm he designed and published. In February 2013 Jacques Himpens obtained his doctor's degree at the University of Maastricht, the Netherlands, under the guidance of professor Jan-Willem Greve with a thesis "Adjustable Gastric Band, Sleeve Gastrectomy and Roux-en-Y gastric bypass by laparoscopy: long term outcomes and laparoscopic strategies in case of failure". By 2018, after having performed over 15000 laparoscopic bariatric procedures, including some 2000 revisional cases, he resigned from the St Blasius hospital and became head of the bariatric-metabolic surgery department of the brand new Delta Chirec hospital at Brussels.

In addition to his appointment with the Université Libre de Bruxelles he is currently faculty member at the Institut pour la Recherche sur les Cancers Digestifs (IRCAD) (director, professor Jacques Marescaux), at Strasbourg, France, where he teaches laparoscopic bariatric surgery.

Over the last years his teaching commitment comprised the training in bariatric surgery of more than 40 fellows, many from abroad.

Recently, he developed and co-patented an incisionless anastomotic tool that is manufactured by the Cousin ° company (Wervik, France), presently being evaluated for the surgical treatment of type 2 diabetes mellitus in animal tests under the leadership of professor Francois Pattou at the university of Lille's experimental surgery animal laboratory. He is a co-opted member of the Belgian society for Obesity and Metabolic Diseases (BeSoms). Because of his achievements in bariatric surgery he was awarded the title of honorary fellow of the American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS) (2015). He is an honorary member of the French and the Spanish Society of Obesity Surgery (SOFFCO and SECO, respectively) and received the fellowship title of the American College of Surgeons (FACS) in October, 2018. He received the Walter Pories 6th annual lecture award at the seventeenth annual Surgery of the Foregut Symposium, Fort Lauderdale, Fa, in 2018. He is past president of the International Federation for the Surgery of Obesity and Metabolic Diseases (IFSO) 2017-2018.

He published over 160 articles in peer reviewed medical journals, authored a substantial number of chapters in surgical books and more specifically in books on bariatric surgery and co-edited five books on bariatric surgery.

He is co-editor for the "Obesity Surgery" journal, is a member of the editorial board of "SOARD" and is a reviewer for the "Lancet" and "Surgical Endoscopy" journals.