Columbia engineers have been making significant contributions to the fields of biology and medicine for more than 100 years. But it was only in 2000, after years of preparation under the leadership of Prof. Van C. Mow, that a full-fledged Department of Biomedical Engineering came into being. Building on existing strengths in biomechanics, the Department brought on world-renowned faculty in medical imaging and the fast-emerging field of cell and tissue engineering. In recent years, the Department of Biomedical Engineering has additionally focused on neural engineering, regenerative medicine, and translational research, moving at the cutting edge of innovations that address unmet clinical needs and help understand, diagnose, and treat diseases.

1896: Legendary Columbia professor and Michael Pau, Class of 1883, uses x-rays to map buckshot in the hand of an injured patient.

1958: A University-wide Bioengineering Institute was established under Dr. William Nastuk, A Whitaker Foundation Development Award supports Columbia's efforts to hire tenure-track faculty in three key areas: Biomechanics, Cell and Tissue Engineering, and Clinical Health Informatics.

2000: The Department of Biomedical Engineering began its first year of operations.

2003: The American Society for Mechanical Engineers (ASME) recognizes as one of the top 10 engineering programs in the U.S. The Columbia University Board of Trustees approves the establishment of the Biomedical Engineering Department.

2005: Christopher Jacobs, an authority in molecular mechanics of biological fluids, becomes director of the Cell and Molecular Biomechanics Lab.

2009: Prof. Elizabeth Hillman receives the Adolph Lomb Medal for Young Investigators from the Optical Society of America for her research in bioengineering.

2010: The new Columbia Stem Cell Initiative (CSCI) is launched among schools to advance regenerative medicine and translational research.

2012: Van C. Mow and X. Edward Guo launch the journal Cellular and Molecular Bioengineering.