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Surgery of the Spine and Spinal Cord

Erik Van de Kelft, editor

Springer International Publishing, 2016

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Over the last decade, a variety of advances in the technical aspects of surgery, spinal instrumentation, and biologics have resulted in a phase of rapid evolution in the field of spine surgery. Furthermore, in the digital age, our ability to read the newest ideas and research from all over the world is unprecedented. Many suggest that this glut of easily accessible digital information, along with the rapid progress of the field, makes traditional textbooks obsolete. However, now we are left with a new problem, in that the amount of information available to the clinician can be overwhelming. Although it is possible to stay on the cutting edge within a highly specialized niche, sifting through all the available data on a general topic can be prohibitively time consuming, and if not done properly it may result in drawing inaccurate conclusions because of incomplete literature review or study misinterpretation. Textbooks allow for a holistic collection of knowledge with expert reflection on where the field stands now, and should instruct the reader in how to supplement their knowledge as the field advances.

To this end, Springer International Publishing recently released a new book on spine surgery. Although the title suggests a neurosurgical approach to the treatment of spinal pathology, the editor, Erik Van de Kelft, does a good job in recruiting esteemed neurosurgeons, orthopedic surgeons, and radiologists to contribute to the book. The result is an up-to-date reference that

would be of interest to all spine surgeons regardless of their training background.

The first part of the book focuses on general concepts. The chapter on cell regeneration provides a comprehensive review of tissue engineering techniques and their future applications to the treatment of spinal pathology. Also included in this section are 2 chapters on evidence-based medicine as it relates to spine surgery. Evidence- and value-based decision-making is a running theme through the entirety of the book, with additional evidence summary sections written by the editor at the end of many chapters.

The bulk of the book is focused on surgical techniques, predominantly for degenerative, neoplastic, and idiopathic pathologies. Parts 2, 3, and 4 are focused on the pathology and treatment of the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar spine, respectively. Among these topics, the book provides a comprehensive review of the diagnosis and current treatment options. In general, the technique chapters are well written. The associated figures are of good quality and helpful to the reader's understanding. Part 5 focuses on sagittal balance, with a particularly well-written chapter on spinopelvic parameters included. Finally, part 6 of the book is dedicated to spine tumors both of metastatic and primary origin. The book is limited in scope in that the surgical management for spine trauma and infection are absent from the text, and there is little discussion of pediatric pathologies beyond adolescent idiopathic scoliosis. Overall, *Surgery of the Spine and Spinal Cord* is a well-written and organized book that would be a valuable addition to any spine surgeon's library.

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