



Foreword

Surgery of the spine continues to evolve. Some operations are more useful than others and some will not stand the test of time.

When I was a young orthopaedic surgeon, hip arthrodesis was a demanding surgery and numerous techniques were developed and illustrated in various textbooks. Now it is difficult to find a modern day textbook of orthopaedic surgery that describes just one technique of hip fusion.

Drs. Haher and Merola have produced a textbook that attempts to cover all possible spine surgeries without preference. Most of these techniques have stood the test of time, but I suspect some will not. It is important, however, for the new spine surgeon to be aware of all these techniques and have them explained in a clear, concise manner.

Mark Twain said "A Classic" is a book that people praise and don't read. I believe this book will be read and still be regarded as a classic.

It seems obvious to me that spine surgery is as much of a surgical specialty as is cardiovascular surgery. Spine surgery needs to continue to differentiate itself from general neurosurgery and orthopaedic surgery as its own specialty. Perhaps the day is not far off when it will be distinct from both of them.

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Preface

Advances in spinal biomechanics, metallurgy, radiology, and perioperative medical support has allowed today's spinal surgeon to evolve and identify new treatment frontiers and surgical techniques. The spinal surgeon is faced with increased time demands resulting from an ever increasing practice volume, clerical demands, documentation, and the need for referrals and authorization for treatment. To achieve optimum patient care, the surgeon must be familiar with all new and current treatment modalities. A means to achieve this educational challenge must exist and must not be a burden on the already overwhelming time constraints of the surgeon.

As the concept of a disease and procedure specific text, "Surgical Techniques for the Spine" was created to meet these demands. This text will present the techniques of a specific surgical procedure as described by the leading authorities in the field.

The contributors to this text were chosen based on their expertise on a given topic. They have either developed, modified, or reported on a clinical series regarding the procedure. They were specifically asked to describe techniques that they employed in performing the operative procedure that would achieve the maximum clinical outcome, while decreasing operative time and complications. Many of the procedures have never been described in the English literature, such as the Innovative Technique of Ponte for the treatment of Kyphosis, the Transforaminal Lumbar Interbody Fusion Technique of Harms, the Extrapedicular Screw Technique of Metz, the Anterior Odontoid Resection of Crockard, and many more. Through "Surgical Techniques for the Spine," a direct and uncomplicated methodology now exists to familiarize oneself with these complex procedures.

Each contributor was given the opportunity to describe their techniques beyond that of a journal article or platform presentation; specifically, what they have learned by performing this procedure throughout their career and how they have modified the procedure based on this experience. They were also asked to describe the advantages, disadvantages, indications, and contraindications they consider for their procedure. The minimum pre-op evaluation is included to adequately plan and perform the technique. The text is divided by anatomical region to aid the reader in locating a technique for a specific spinal problem.

This book will not replace experience or surgical judgment but, hopefully, it will allow the reader to improve patient selection and avoid pitfalls and complications.

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