

Foreword

The introduction of the concept of endoscopic surgery by Bozzini¹ in 1807 and the use of a microscope in spinal surgery by Yasargil² in 1977 paved the way for modern outpatient spinal surgery. The availability of small-caliber scopes has given spinal surgeons the ability to treat a variety of spinal disorders under arthroscopic or endoscopic magnification and illumination on an ambulatory basis. Endoscopic techniques permit the visualization of anatomic and pathologic elements not only dorsally from the surgical exposure site but also medially, laterally, and ventrally. In addition, performing surgery through a cannula that separates the tissue rather than severing it has been shown to reduce the postoperative morbidity and recuperation.

The various contributors to *Outpatient Spinal Surgery* discuss the evolution of minimally invasive spinal surgery from simple blind nuclear debulking procedures via chemonucleolysis³ and mechanical posterior quadrant nuclear resection⁴ to the present-day management of spinal disorders under microscopic, arthroscopic, or endoscopic visualization. Much has been written concerning the significance of the epidural venous system in the development of lumbar radiculopathy.⁵ Subligamentous arthroscopic access to a contained or nonmigrated sequestered herniated disc and transforaminal access for the retrieval of intracanalicular disc fragments remain viable alternative methods of treatment for these types of herniations.⁶ Not only does this textbook describe various operative techniques that are available to spinal surgeons who perform same-day surgery, but it also provides information on outcomes studies and the experience of prominent surgeons with a given procedure. The material presented is well organized and should be most informative to minimally invasive neurologic and orthopedic surgeons.

Parviz Kambin, M.D.

Professor, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery,
MCP Hahnemann School of Medicine,
Philadelphia, Pa.

REFERENCES

1. Bozzini PD. Der Lichtleiter, oder Beschreibung einer einfachen Vorrichtung und Ihrer Anwendung zur Erleuchtung innerer Höhlen und Zwischenräume des lebenden animalischen Körpers. Weimar: 1807.
2. Yasargil G. Microsurgical operation of herniated lumbar disc. *Adv Neurosurg* 4:81, 1977.
3. Smith L, Garvin PJ, Gester RM, Jennings RB. Enzyme dissolution of the nucleus pulposus. *Nature* 198:1311-1312, 1963.
4. Kambin P, Gellman H. Percutaneous lateral discectomy of the lumbar spine: A preliminary report. *Clin Orthop* 174:127-132, 1983.

-
5. Parke WW. The significance of venous return impairment in ischemic radiculopathy and myelopathy. *Orthop Clin North Am* 22:213-221, 1991.
 6. Hermantin FU, Peters T, Quartararo L, Kambin P. A prospective, randomized study comparing the results of open discectomy with those of video-assisted arthroscopic microdiscectomy. *J Bone Joint Surg Am* 81:958-965, 1999.