

Preface

The demand for outpatient cutaneous surgery procedures has increased at a rapid rate over the last several decades. Cosmetic, excisional, and reconstructive procedures are being performed by primary care physicians and a variety of specialists in different disciplines, such as dermatology, plastic surgery, ophthalmology, and otolaryngology. As the number of cutaneous surgery procedures rises, so will the rate of complications, which are inevitable and occur even with the most skilled, careful, and meticulous surgeons.

In the practice of medicine, we often learn more from complications than triumphs. The authors of the chapters in this book were recruited based on their experience and respective areas of expertise. To my knowledge, no book exists that summarizes the medical literature regarding complications in cutaneous surgery. The goal of this book is to provide a comprehensive text that will enable the practicing physician to formulate a preoperative strategy to prevent complications before they occur and to properly diagnose and manage complications when they arise in order to provide a better service to the patient.

This book is divided into three sections: acute surgical complications, chronic surgical complications, and complications of cosmetic procedures. Each chapter discusses a different complication and outlines proper preventative, diagnostic, and management strategies based on the medical literature and the experience of the author. Acute complications, some of which may be associated with serious morbidity and mortality, are those experienced within the first few weeks of surgery. Chronic complications primarily are the result of suboptimal scarring. Scar revision techniques are reviewed in detail. Psychological complications, which no longer can be overlooked with the growing popularity of cosmetic procedures, are also discussed in this section. Finally, the section on complications of cosmetic procedures covers a wide variety of pertinent topics such as lasers, chemical peels, dermabrasion, liposuction, filler substances, botulinum toxin, and sclerotherapy. This section was included because of the recent increase in cosmetic surgery as physicians look for new ways to expand their practices in the current healthcare market.

All physicians performing cutaneous surgery will experience complications. Each complication should serve as a learning experience that should enable the surgeon to make arrangements to prevent the same complication from occurring again in the future. Hopefully, this book will enhance patient care by allowing the reader to benefit from the collective experience of others instead of learning “the hard way”.

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