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## Preface

“We should strive to welcome change and challenges, because they are what help us grow.”

H.G. Wells

Change is most often simply a matter of time, and in surgery that is no different. Large incisions have frequently been replaced by small, and hands by graspers. The surgeon may now find themselves away from the operative table, as open surgery is steadily transitioning to laparoscopic and robotic techniques. Even traditional approaches to anorectal lesions have witnessed a new paradigm. That is not to say that all changes are needed, or even welcome. Yet, the changes witnessed in the evolution of minimally invasive colorectal surgery have played a large role in both minimizing morbidity and maximizing outcomes. Change also brings certain challenges, and specifically, colorectal surgery presents its own unique set of trials. It is within this context that *Technique and Best Practices* examines the considerations, drawbacks, and advancements minimally invasive techniques have provided in the evaluation, management, and outcomes across a broad range of colorectal disease and procedures.

For some readers of this book, a minimally invasive approach to colorectal disease may add a new dimension to the management of these patients. For others, it is the opportunity to learn helpful tips, specifics about a certain procedure, or to fine-tune what has already become a routine part of their practice. Even if you have successfully overcome many of the technical challenges of minimally invasive surgery, the preoperative evaluation, perioperative decision-making, and management of postoperative complications can be demanding and consuming. Wherever you may be on this spectrum, *Technique and Best Practices* has something to offer. The underlying focus throughout the text is on providing pragmatic advice and reproducible techniques that can be readily implemented by surgeons of varying experience to successfully treat complex colorectal problems through minimally invasive methods.

Our author experts have years of experience with minimally invasive approaches to colorectal disease, and in some cases, have been the pioneers in this field. Despite extensive training and a wealth of clinical experience, many surgeons do not have the resources or volume to garner the skills and experience to feel completely comfortable with, or in some cases, master these techniques. In this text, our authors have cogently and equitably provided a unique, practical guide that covers the evaluation, step-by-step technical approach, and detailed management techniques. Within each chapter, they focus on the details to help overcome the issues that make these procedures and disease processes challenging. Yet, this is more than a “how to” manual or an algorithm-based guide.

Our other aim with *Technique and Best Practices* was to understand the intricate thought process behind each author’s proposed technique and describe their personal insight as to why they approach a particular colorectal disease process or minimally invasive procedure a certain way. This abundant practical advice allows a concise depiction of a methodical, understandable approach to both straightforward and complex cases. Additionally, by providing separate chapters on the procedure and the disease process, we systematically provide both an overview as well as detailed portrayal of how a minimally invasive approach aids in the management of these patients.

Since its conception, it has been our privilege and pleasure to work with this expert cohort of authors, as their individual contributions have come together to make a combined effort where the sum is definitely greater than the parts. We would like to personally thank each one of them for taking time away from their busy practices and families to share their knowledge, skill, and valuable insights regarding minimally invasive colorectal surgery. We are grateful for their candor in discussing both the positive aspects as well inherent limitations. It is our wish that *Technique and Best Practices* serves as a valuable resource for surgeons of all ages and expertise, and hope you will find this as intriguing and helpful as we have.

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Technique and Best Practices

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