
Preface

Traditional posterior spinal surgery has been criticized because of the extent of disruption of normal tissues in order to provide access to the spine. With the development of enabling technologies, less-invasive approaches to the spine have been established allowing for the ability to minimize damage to uninvolved collateral structures without compromising the ultimate surgical goals. Numerous studies have shown the value of less-invasive approaches not only in terms of reducing patient morbidity and expediting recovery but also in providing cost-effectiveness.

Over the past decade, lateral lumbar interbody fusion (LLIF) has been popularized as a less-invasive, tissue-sparing approach in the treatment of a variety of spinal disorders. Initially applied primarily for degenerative lumbar pathologies, the technique has evolved to be valuable in the management of spinal trauma, tumors, and complex spinal deformity. The technique has been shown to be versatile, reliable, and reproducible with an acceptable safety profile. Dr. Wang has assembled many of the experts and taught leaders in the field and has developed a long overdue text dedicated to the field of LLIF. *Minimally Invasive Lateral Spine Surgery* provides a detailed discussion of patient selection, surgical indications and techniques, and complication avoidance from many of the foremost “lateral” spinal surgeons. In addition, a frank assessment of the risks and complications of the procedure are presented. Wherever possible the authors have relied on the evidence base to discuss outcomes and shortcomings.

Lateral lumbar fusion is clearly “here to stay,” and it is beholden on the proponents and experts in this field to provide teaching and instruction to those willing to learn. This book succeeds in that goal as well as in providing a valuable resource to surgeons experienced with LLIF. Central to discussion of any surgical technique is the patient who trusts the surgeon to make an evidence-based decision regarding the optimal solution for their particular condition. This is not lost on Dr. Wang who has done a terrific job of keeping the patient front and center in this book.

I believe that *Minimally Invasive Lateral Spine Surgery* should be read and studied not only by spine surgeons with a focus on less-invasive techniques but by all spine surgeons. LLIF has become an essential spine surgical option that should be a part of our armamentarium as we strive to optimize our patient care.

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