

Foreword

It is easy to write a foreword for a topic which holds a great deal of personal interest. I have my own preference with colloid cysts, which is a small midline transcalsal exposure without the use of rigid retraction allowing complete visualization with extrication of the entire cyst. However, there are many neurosurgeons of equal aptitude, whose convictions on how to treat these enigmatic lesions are different from mine, and what this book beautifully provides is a rational review from master practitioners of their personal preferences, allowing the readers a choice of well-reasoned and thoughtful options to form their own preference of treatment.

There are few conditions that provoke more consternation and controversy among neurosurgeons than the colloid cyst. The sudden coma and death for which the colloid cyst is justly infamous for has left many neurosurgeons to ponder on how best to manage these patients. At the same time, the surgical risk, especially of forniceal damage with the risk of antegrade memory loss, is not insignificant in a mostly asymptomatic group of patients who may harbor these lesions for decades. Thus, the decision on whether to intervene in an asymptomatic patient remains difficult. Unfortunately, there has been a lack of long-term, reliable, natural history data to help with solid evidence-based decision-making.

Should the decision to operate be made, various treatment options are available, including cerebrospinal fluid diversion, stereotactic drainage, transcortical or transcalsal microsurgery, and endoscopic removal, leaving ample room for debate as to which is the “best” solution for any specific patient.

The present volume embodies the efforts of three editors who represent a cross-section of career stages. My contemporary and friend Ralph Dacey had a distinguished career practicing microneurosurgery including a long and distinguished service as Chair at Washington University, St. Louis. My former fellow and colleague Peter Nakaji is in the early years of his own service as Chair at the University of Arizona College of Medicine in Phoenix, where he performs complex microsurgery and minimally invasive and endoscopic surgery. Their colleague Thomas Beaumont is in the early middle part of his career at the University of California San Diego, where he also practices both cranial microsurgery and neuroendoscopy. The author list includes an honor roll of acknowledged experts in neurosurgery in general and on colloid cysts in particular, both from North America and from around the globe.

This volume contains much that will interest the student of neurosurgery at any phase, from residency to those in established practice. The clear presentation and insightful illustrations enrich a fundamentally useful tome.

I hope you will find it as thought-provoking and informative to read as I did. Fundamentally, this book is about bringing together what is known and what is controversial, providing ample fodder for vigorous debate. With the knowledge gleaned from these pages we can provide up-to-date thoughtful options to our patients with colloid cysts and their families.

Recommended with enthusiasm, enjoy!

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