

Book review

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Surgical pathology of the ear and lateral skull base

Aziz Belal (editor), Mario Sanna (editor), Publisher: Elmaaref Press, Alexandria, Date of publication: 1999, 3 sections, 16 chapters; Pages: 447.

Dedicated to Harold Schukreht, MD, who stated 'how can we treat a disease, if we do not know the pathology or cause?'

Introduced by William House, MD, who mentioned that 'this book will be an excellent reference for both the young and the experienced otologist'.

The illustrations in this book were obtained from the two largest temporal bone laboratories in the world: The Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary and the House Ear Institute.

The book is a unique piece of translational research on pathology as it relates to ear and lateral skull base surgery. The book is divided into three sections.

The first section concerns with 'anatomical variants of surgical importance'. These are commonly encountered and have no effect on the physiological functions of the ear. The identification of anatomical variants is important both preoperatively and intraoperatively so that the surgeon can differentiate them from pathological lesions and leave them undisturbed whenever possible.

In the book, the authors have discussed these variants across 96 pages and in four chapters: Temporal bone, Pneumatization, Blood vessels, and Nerves.

The second section of the book concerns with 'pathological variants of surgical importance'. This section is crucial for outlining a surgical strategy based on the pathological variants of a certain disease including origin, paths of spread, histological characteristics, and biological behavior. This section spans 163 pages across six chapters: External auditory canal, Tympanic membrane, Middle ear cleft, Inner ear, Facial nerve, and Skull base.

The third section concerns with 'postoperative pathology' and describes what happens in the ear after surgery. It is important to understand the causes of failure and complications and to prepare for revision surgery. This section spans 182 pages across six chapters: External auditory canal, Ear drum, Middle ear, Mastoid, Inner ear, and Lateral skull base.

The book was written in 1999 in a simple slide presentation-like manner with 583 figures, which makes reading it simple and easy to remember.



It is a must read for all ear and lateral skull base surgeons.

A second edition in the future will add to the value of this book, with improvements in the quality of the print and addition of colored micrographs and radiological correlations.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

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