

Book review

Surgical disorders of the sacrum

James R Doty and Setti S Rengachary (editors), 320 pages, Thieme Medical Publishers Inc, New York, 1994
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Sacrum, the holy bone, devoted to the goddess Osiris, has at last been honored with a book of its own. In addition to embryologic and evolutionary comments about this bone, a thorough description on the surgical anatomy is given. More than 200 pages deal with diseases of the sacrum: congenital disorders, tumors, trauma and infections. Tumors such as chordomas, ependymomas, and teratomas are described in detail, as also is their surgical treatment, including explicit descriptions of the techniques of subtotal and total amputations of the sacrum. The important contributions from the Gothenburg group (Stener, Gunterberg et al.) to the fields of biomechanics and surgical treatment of sacral tumors is acknowledged by repeated references. Non-surgical treatment modalities such as embolization and radiation therapy are also included. The reader is given information on patients with human tail remnants as case reports, which reflects the wish to be as complete as possible.

The authors, neurosurgeons in California and Minneapolis, have made an excellent contribution to the literature on the spine, and have been wise enough not to expand outside the sacrum. Everything you need to know about this bone and its surgical disorders is included in this beautiful volume with up-to-date high class radiological illustrations and excellent illustrations of surgical techniques. Not every orthopedic surgeon needs a book concerning the sacrum, but for those working in the field, this book is a must. The editors and their 52 contributors are to be congratulated on an outstanding achievement.

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