

Book review

Surgical exposures in orthopaedics. The anatomic approach

Stanley Hoppenfeld and Piet deBoer, 2nd ed, 604 pages, J B Lippincott Company, Philadelphia, 1994
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This book contains 604 pages and 682 drawings (by Hugh A Thomas). 12 chapters deal with specific areas of the body and 1 with safe routes for percutaneous insertion of external fixators into the long bones.

The commonest approaches are described. These are internervous between muscles supplied by different nerves and, in many cases, they allow exposure of the whole length of a bone. The book is, in fact, an excellent extension and improvement of Henry's classical *Extensile Exposure*.

The introduction to each approach describes indications, advantages and disadvantages as well as significant dangers (nerves, vessels, muscles and tendons) and how to avoid them. The position of the patient, surgical landmarks and location of incisions are clearly described, as well as the superficial and deep anatomy, all of which are mandatory knowledge for safe surgical dissection. The basic principle "Do not cut round structures" is further reinforced by adding colors to nerves, arteries and veins in the illustrations. The drawings provide excellent step-by-step help for the surgeon from skin to bone.

Before using the book as a manual for different surgical approaches, the surgeon should read it carefully from cover to cover. Not only the orthopedic resident but also the highly experienced orthopedic surgeon will learn new things and find many safe exposures that will later prove useful. Minor differences of opinion can, of course, be discussed. For instance, I prefer 2 incisions for opening the 4 compartments instead of excising of part of the fibula. I also prefer to insert a transfixation pin in the condylar region of the elbow from the ulnar side, and keep the elbow joint in an extended position to avoid injury to the ulnar nerve.

In summary, this book is recommended not only for the book case in the operating room, but also for the orthopedic surgeon's own library.

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