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BOOK REVIEW

Neuroimaging Clinics: Spinal Imaging: Overview and Update, Vol. 17, No. 1

M.M. Thurnher, ed. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders; 2007.

Every couple of years, it is necessary to bring together all of the things we've learned in 1 place for handy review. As far as the spine is concerned, this issue of the *Neuroimaging Clinics of North America* journal series serves that purpose for the next few years, the first decade of the 21st century. It doesn't include any topics on spinal intervention, but that is entirely appropriate for the stated purpose: it's all imaging.

For those who just want to check out the latest thinking on degenerative spinal disease, of which there probably really isn't that much that is new, it's all here in 1 well-written chapter.

Indeed, this chapter is a very good "overview and update." There are also excellent sections on congenital anomalies and demyelinating and infectious diseases of the spine, and the latest on spinal trauma. An entirely separate chapter is devoted to scoliosis, with a little duplication of information that is also found under "congenital anomalies." A complete chapter on imaging vascular diseases of the spine brings some diffi-

cult anatomy and schemes for imaging together in 1 place for handy future reference. Chapters such as these have always made the *Neuroimaging Clinics* series particularly helpful for the practicing radiologist.

A chapter devoted to tumors of the spine in children is well done and includes tumors of the central nervous system as well as osseous tumors of the spinal axis. This is comprehensive, and many of the concepts here are applicable to adults as well, but adult tumors are not discussed per se, and they might have been included either in the same chapter or in another by themselves. This is a very minor criticism.

The meaty "update" section is to be found in the last 2 chapters, 1 of which discusses cutting-edge imaging techniques and includes some unique and handy strategies for diffusion and perfusion imaging, functional techniques, and 3T imaging of the spine. Perfusion and functional MR imaging techniques are not routinely performed on the spinal cord, and many of us are not yet familiar with their application, so this is good information to review if anyone ever wants or needs to try it. The very last chapter is an elegant treatise on diffusion tensor imaging and fiber tracking of the spine, which will appeal to anyone with an interest in neuroanatomy who never, ever thought they would get to routinely see images of the corticospinal and spinothalamic tracts in their lifetime.

In each of the chapters, the illustrations are numerous, pertinent, and of very good image detail and quality. Examples of each condition discussed in the text can be found on the same page as the discussion—an editing and publishing feat that is a really nice touch because the reader doesn't have to flip backward or forward to find the illustration that goes with the discussion. I highly recommend this issue of the *Neuroimaging Clinics of North America*.

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