

INTRODUCTION

Expanding lateral access spine surgery

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LATERAL approaches to the spine have been increasingly recognized as a minimally invasive way to treat spinal pathology and improve patient outcomes. Even as the number of spine cases using the lateral approach increases internationally, many spine surgeons are reticent to adopt lateral approaches as they may have not had exposure to these techniques in their training. Furthermore, if this training did occur, it may have been limited to more straightforward degenerative lateral techniques at the midlumbar levels, and thus for these surgeons more advanced lateral techniques may remain daunting. In this issue of *Neurosurgical Focus: Video*, the editors hope to provide readers with tools, tips, and techniques to advance their lateral access spine surgery practice as well as treat pathologies via lateral techniques in which they may have not considered previously. From thoracic disc treatment via a lateral retropleural technique to a transthoracic endoscopic approach, and from treating infection to scoliosis to schwannoma, this issue highlights how the lateral access approach can be utilized effectively for difficult pathology. As the videos emphasize safety and nuances, whether in the thoracic space, at the thoracolumbar junction, or when transitioning to prone lateral, the editors hope that this issue will help readers further adopt advanced lateral access surgery confidently.

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Disclosures

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