

Foreword

“The burden of the back”—back pain in all its various forms has always been and will remain the domain of the specialist field of orthopedics.

The task of “conquering” back pain, or at least implementing adequate forms of therapy, is becoming increasingly difficult under the conditions found in the Public Health Services with their lack of funding and concepts.

Treatment guidelines are strictly monitored using “evidence based medicine.” This is definitely advantageous to patients and practitioners, but can also result in the freedom of treatment being “legally patronized.” It is characterized by conflicts about which line of thought should be followed, especially by the societies “that argue about back treatment.”

During the development of pain therapy in Germany over the last 10 years we have learnt a great deal from the conflicts relating to back pain in all of its forms. This process must be continued.

This book should aid in improving confidence when treating back pain. It is based on the work and new concepts from the “Interdisziplinären Gesellschaft für orthopädische und unfallchirurgische Schmerztherapie” (Interdisciplinary Society for Orthopedic and Trauma Surgical Pain Therapy—IGOST) and represents the pain therapy section of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Orthopädie und Orthopädische Chirurgie (German Society for Orthopedics and Orthopedic Surgery—DGOOC).

More than 90% of back pain is treated as “nonspecific” simply because the therapist knows and has learnt too little about the back. The further development of this phenomenon has to be counteracted.

It is also necessary to prevent the overuse of “technical methods and injection techniques under radiological

monitoring” solely because the “traditional orthopedic clinical examination” has fallen into oblivion.

Rather, the wide range found in an established orthopedic/trauma surgical therapy should be depicted, with its proven long-term therapy success.

This book makes it clear that all spinal injection techniques were and will remain the domain of orthopedic and trauma surgery, as IGOST has conveyed in its courses.

A portion of this book is also dedicated to the rational pharmaceutical treatment of back pain, taking into account new findings in the area of local anesthetics.

The core of the matter here is the prevention of chronicification of back pain using interdisciplinary therapeutic approaches and a specific early therapy management, and not simply the “management of an ever-increasing number of pain patients.”

This book corresponds to the “golden standard” for spinal injection therapy from an orthopedic/trauma surgical point of view and is an excellent companion for our courses. It complements a succession of remarkable specialist books which have emerged with the help of IGOST over recent years.

It is on this premise that I thank the authors for their work with the IGOST and wish them success with this book.

I wish all our readers enjoyment and success with the teachings of this book and hope that they are able to apply what they have learnt in their daily work.

H. E. Brunner, MD
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