SNELL’S CLINICAL NEUROANATOMY
EIGHTH EDITION

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The trip has been long and the cost has been high . . . but no great thing was attained easily. A long tale, like a tall Tower, must be built a stone at a time.

—Stephen King

To my wife, Brienne
For providing more love and support than I deserve.

To my boys, Carter and Caden
For providing inspiration and humor . . . a lot of humor.

To my students
May you find your Tower.
Preface

This book contains the basic neuroanatomical facts necessary for the practice of medicine. It is suitable for medical students, dental students, nurses, and allied health students. Residents find this book useful during their rotations.

The functional organization of the nervous system has been emphasized and indicates how injury and disease can result in neurologic deficits. The amount of factual information has been strictly limited to that which is clinically important.

In this edition, authorship has transitioned from the late Dr. Richard Snell, who, with brilliance and dedication, fathered the previous seven editions and provided the framework for the eighth. The content of each chapter has been reviewed and edited to be more straightforward and concise. The traditional artwork has been recolored and updated to enhance the clarity and to provide additional information to each image. High-quality magnetic resonance images and histologic photomicrographs have been updated to provide greater visual details.

Each chapter introduces the relevance of neuroanatomy through a short case report.

- Clinical Example. A short case report that serves to dramatize the relevance of neuroanatomy introduces each chapter.
- Chapter Objectives. This section details the material that is most important to learn and understand in each chapter.
- Basic Neuroanatomy. This section provides basic information on neuroanatomical structures that are of clinical importance. Numerous examples of normal radiographs, CT scans, MRIs, and PET scans are also provided. Many cross-sectional diagrams have been included to stimulate students to think in terms of three-dimensional anatomy, which is so important in the interpretation of CT scans and MR images.
- Clinical Notes. This section provides the practical application of neuroanatomical facts that are essential in clinical practice. It emphasizes the structures that the clinician will encounter when making a diagnosis and treating a patient. It also provides the information necessary to understand many procedures and techniques and notes the anatomical “pitfalls” commonly encountered.
- NEW! Key Concepts. These quick, bulleted reviews of key topics and information are provided at the end of each chapter.
- Clinical Problem Solving. This section provides the student with many examples of clinical situations in which a knowledge of neuroanatomy is necessary to solve clinical problems and to institute treatment; solutions to the problems are provided at the end of the chapter.
- Review Questions. The purpose of the questions is threefold: to focus attention on areas of importance, to enable students to assess their areas of weakness, and to provide a form of self-evaluation when questions are answered under examination conditions. Some of the questions are centered around a clinical problem that requires a neuroanatomical answer. Solutions to the problem are provided at the end of each chapter.

An interactive Review Test, including over 450 questions, is provided online.

The book is extensively illustrated. The majority of the figures have been kept simple and are in color. As in the previous edition, a concise Color Atlas of the dissected brain is included prior to the text. This small but important group of colored plates enables the reader to quickly relate a particular part of the brain to the whole organ.

R.S.
R.S.S.
Acknowledgments

Starting with the first edition of Clinical Neuroanatomy published in 1980, many people have provided their expertise and should be recognized for their contributions. First and foremost, thanks to Richard S. Snell whose shoulders we stand upon to advance our own intellectual progress.

Throughout this text and in previous editions, the following individuals provided valuable contributions and are gratefully acknowledged: N. Cauna, L. Clerk, D. O. Davis, H. Dey, M. Feldman, T. M. J. Fitzgerald, I. Grunther, J. M. Korns, T. McCarthy, A. Peters, G. Sze, and L. Wener.

EIGHTH EDITION

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Contents

Preface ................................................................. vii
Acknowledgments ...................................................... ix
Color Atlas of Brain .................................................. xix

CHAPTER 1  Introduction and Organization of the Nervous System  1
Central and Peripheral Nervous Systems  1
Major Divisions of the Central Nervous System  2
Major Divisions of the Peripheral Nervous System  12
Early Development of the Nervous System  14
Clinical Notes  16
Clinical Problem Solving  27
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  28
Review Questions  29
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  31

CHAPTER 2  Neurons and Neuroglia  33
Neurons  33
Neuroglia  54
Extracellular Space  60
Clinical Notes  62
Clinical Problem Solving  65
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  66
Review Questions  67
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  69

CHAPTER 3  Nerve Fibers and Peripheral Innervation  71
Nerve Fibers  71
Peripheral Nerves  80
Receptor Endings  84
Effector Endings  93
Segmental Innervation of Skin  98
Segmental Innervation of Muscles  100
Muscle Tone and Muscle Action  101
Motor Unit Summation  102
Muscle Fatigue  102
Posture  102
Clinical Notes  105
Clinical Problem Solving  119
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  122
Review Questions  125
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  128
CHAPTER 4  Spinal Cord and Ascending, Descending, and Intersegmental Tracts  
Brief Review of the Vertebral Column  131
Spinal Cord  136
Ascending Tracts  142
Descending Tracts  152
Intersegmental Tracts  160
Renshaw Cells and Lower Motor Neuron Inhibition  162
Clinical Notes  163
Clinical Problem Solving  175
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  177
Review Questions  180
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  182

CHAPTER 5  Brainstem  185
Skull Anatomy  185
Cranial Cavity  191
Introduction to the Brainstem  195
Medulla Oblongata  196
Pons  204
Midbrain  209
Clinical Notes  215
Clinical Problem Solving  219
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  220
Review Questions  222
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  226

CHAPTER 6  Cerebellum and Its Connections  229
Gross Appearance  229
Structures  231
Cerebellar Cortical Mechanisms  234
Cerebellar Afferent Fibers  236
Cerebellar Efferent Fibers  239
Functions of the Cerebellum  240
Clinical Notes  241
Clinical Problem Solving  244
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  244
Review Questions  245
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  247

CHAPTER 7  Cerebrum  249
Subdivisions  249
Diencephalon  249
General Appearance of the Cerebral Hemispheres  255
Main Sulci  256
Cerebral Hemisphere Lobes  258
Internal Structure of the Cerebral Hemispheres (Atlas Plates 4 and 5)  260
Clinical Notes  267
Clinical Problem Solving  273
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  274
Review Questions  275
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  277
CHAPTER 8  The Structure and Functional Localization of the Cerebral Cortex  279

Structure  279
Cortical Mechanisms  283
Cortical Areas  283
Cerebral Dominance  289
Clinical Notes  290
Clinical Problem Solving  293
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  294
Review Questions  295
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  297

CHAPTER 9  Reticular Formation and Limbic System  299

Reticular Formation  299
Limbic System  301
Clinical Notes  306
Clinical Problem Solving  307
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  307
Review Questions  307
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  308

CHAPTER 10  Basal Nuclei (Basal Ganglia)  310

Terminology  310
Corpus Striatum  310
Amygdaloid Nucleus  311
Substantia Nigra and Subthalamic Nuclei  312
Claustrum  312
Connections of the Corpus Striatum and Globus Pallidus  312
Basal Nuclei Functions  314
Clinical Notes  315
Clinical Problem Solving  319
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  319
Review Questions  320
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  321

CHAPTER 11  Cranial Nerve Nuclei  323

Cranial Nerves  323
Cranial Nerve Organization  323
Olfactory Nerves (Cranial Nerve I)  326
Optic Nerve (Cranial Nerve II)  327
Oculomotor Nerve (Cranial Nerve III)  331
Trochlear Nerve (Cranial Nerve IV)  331
Trigeminal Nerve (Cranial Nerve V)  332
Abducens Nerve (Cranial Nerve VI)  335
Facial Nerve (Cranial Nerve VII)  337
Vestibulocochlear Nerve (Cranial Nerve VIII)  339
Glossopharyngeal Nerve (Cranial Nerve IX)  341
Vagus Nerve (Cranial Nerve X)  343
Accessory Nerve (Cranial Nerve XI)  345
Hypoglossal Nerve (Cranial Nerve XII)  347
Clinical Notes  348
Clinical Problem Solving  356
Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  357
Review Questions  358
Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  361
CHAPTER 12  Thalamus  363
  General Appearance  363
  Subdivisions  363
  Connections  366
  Function  367
  Clinical Notes  369
  Clinical Problem Solving  370
  Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  370
  Review Questions  370
  Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  372

CHAPTER 13  Hypothalamus  373
  Hypothalamus  373
  Hypothalamic Nuclei  375
  Hypothalamic Lines of Communication  376
  Functions  380
  Clinical Notes  382
  Clinical Problem Solving  383
  Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  384
  Review Questions  384
  Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  385

CHAPTER 14  Autonomic Nervous System  387
  Organization  387
  Large Autonomic Plexuses  390
  Autonomic Ganglia  390
  Preganglionic Transmitters  392
  Fast, Slow, and Inhibitory Synaptic Potentials  392
  Ganglion-Stimulating Agents  392
  Ganglion-Blocking Agents  392
  Postganglionic Nerve Endings  393
  Postganglionic Transmitters  393
  Other Postganglionic Transmitters  394
  Cholinergic Receptor Blockade  394
  Adrenergic Receptor Blockade  394
  Higher Control  394
  Enteric Nervous System  394
  Functions  395
  Differences Between Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Systems  395
  Autonomic Innervations  396
  Ans Physiologic Reflexes  406
  Clinical Notes  406
  Clinical Problem Solving  411
  Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  412
  Review Questions  413
  Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  416

CHAPTER 15  Meninges  418
  Brain Meninges  418
  Spinal Cord Meninges  425
  Clinical Notes  428
  Clinical Problem Solving  432
  Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  433
  Review Questions  434
  Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  435
**Contents**

**CHAPTER 16**  **Ventricular System and Cerebrospinal Fluid**  436  
- Ventricular System  436  
- Subarachnoid Space  447  
- Cerebrospinal Fluid  448  
- Blood–Brain and Blood–Cerebrospinal Fluid Barriers  452  
- Clinical Notes  455  
- Clinical Problem Solving  458  
- Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  459  
- Review Questions  460  
- Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  462

**CHAPTER 17**  **Blood Supply of the Brain and Spinal Cord**  464  
- Arteries of the Brain  464  
- Veins of the Brain  469  
- Brain Capillaries  470  
- Cerebral Circulation  470  
- Spinal Cord Arteries  471  
- Spinal Cord Veins  472  
- Clinical Notes  472  
- Clinical Problem Solving  480  
- Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  482  
- Review Questions  484  
- Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  486

**CHAPTER 18**  **Nervous System Development**  488  
- Spinal Cord  488  
- Brain  490  
- Clinical Notes  498  
- Clinical Problem Solving  502  
- Answers and Explanations to Clinical Problem Solving  503  
- Review Questions  503  
- Answers and Explanations to Review Questions  504

**APPENDIX**  **Neuroanatomical Data of Clinical Significance and Clinical Neuroanatomy Techniques**  507

**Index**  513
Figure CA-1  Top: Superior view of the brain.  Bottom: Inferior view of the brain.
Figure CA-2  Top: Anterior view of the brain. Bottom: Posterior view of the brain.
Figure CA-3  Top: Right lateral view of the brain. Bottom: Medial view of the right side of the brain following median sagittal section.
Figure CA-4  Coronal sections of the brain passing through the anterior horn of the lateral ventricle (top), the mammillary bodies (middle), and the pons (bottom).
Figure CA-5  Top: Horizontal section of the cerebrum showing the lentiform nucleus, the caudate nucleus, the thalamus, and the internal capsule. Bottom: Oblique coronal section of the brain.
Figure CA-6  Top: Inferior view of the brain showing cranial nerves. The abducens and facial nerves cannot be seen. Bottom: Enlarged inferior view of the central part of the brain.
Figure CA-7  Top: Posterior view of the brainstem. The greater part of the cerebellum had been removed to expose the floor of the fourth ventricle. Middle: Superior view of the cerebellum showing the vermis and right and left cerebellar hemispheres. Bottom: Inferior view of the cerebellum showing the vermis and right and left cerebellar hemispheres.
Figure CA-8  Enlarged medial view of the right side of the brain following median sagittal section, showing the continuity of the central canal, fourth ventricle, cerebral aqueduct, and the third ventricle and entrance into the lateral ventricle through the interventricular foramen.
Chapter Objectives

- To understand the basic organization of the main structures that form the nervous system
- To gain a three-dimensional appreciation of the parts of the brain and their relative positions to one another

A 23-year-old student is driving home from a party and crashes his car head-on into a tree. On examination in the emergency department of the local hospital, he has a fracture dislocation of the 7th thoracic vertebra, with signs and symptoms of severe damage to the spinal cord. Later, he is found to have paralysis of the left leg. Testing of cutaneous sensibility reveals a band of cutaneous hyperesthesia (increased sensitivity) extending around the abdominal wall on the left side at the level of the umbilicus. Just below this, he has a narrow band of anesthesia and analgesia. On the right side, he has total analgesia, thermoneurohyposthesia, and partial loss of touch sensation of the skin of the abdominal wall below the level of the umbilicus and involving the whole of the right leg.

With knowledge of anatomy, a clinician knows that a fracture dislocation of the 7th thoracic vertebra can result in severe damage to the 10th thoracic segment of the spinal cord. Because of the small size of the vertebral foramen in the thoracic region, such an injury inevitably results in damage to the spinal cord. Knowledge of the vertebral levels of the various segments of the spinal cord enables the clinician to determine the likely neurologic deficits. The unequal sensory and motor losses on the two sides indicate a left hemisection of the cord. The band of anesthesia and analgesia was caused by the destruction of the cord on the left side at the level of the 10th thoracic segment; all afferent nerve fibers entering the cord at that point were interrupted. The loss of pain and thermal sensibilities and the loss of light touch below the level of the umbilicus on the right side were caused by the interruption of the lateral and anterior spinothalamic tracts on the left side of the cord.

To comprehend what has happened to this patient, the relationship between the spinal cord and its surrounding vertebral column must be understood. The various neurologic deficits will be easier to understand after the reader has learned how the nervous pathways pass up and down the spinal cord. This information will be discussed in Chapter 4.

The nervous system and the endocrine system control the functions of the body. The nervous system is composed basically of specialized cells, whose function is to receive sensory stimuli and to transmit them to effector organs, whether muscular or glandular. The sensory stimuli that arise either outside or inside the body are correlated within the nervous system, and the efferent impulses are coordinated so that the effector organs work harmoniously together for the well-being of the individual. In addition, the nervous system of higher species has the ability to store sensory information received during past experiences. This information, when appropriate, is integrated with other nervous impulses and channeled into the common efferent pathway.

Central and Peripheral Nervous Systems

As shown in Figure 1-1, the nervous system is divided into two main parts, for purposes of description: the central nervous system (CNS), which consists of the brain and spinal cord, and the peripheral nervous system (PNS), which consists of the cranial and spinal nerves and their associated ganglia.

In the CNS, the brain and spinal cord are the main centers where correlation and integration of nervous information occur. Both the brain and spinal cord are covered with a system of membranes (meninges) and are suspended in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). Meninges are further protected by the bones of the skull and the vertebral column (Fig. 1-2).

The CNS is composed of large numbers of neurons, which are excitable nerve cells, and their processes,
known as axons or nerve fibers. Neurons are supported by specialized tissue called neuroglia (Fig. 1-3).

The CNS interior is organized into gray and white matter. Gray matter, which is gray in color, consists of nerve cells embedded in neuroglia. White matter consists of nerve fibers embedded in neuroglia and is white in color because of the presence of lipid material in nerve fiber myelin sheaths.

In the PNS, the cranial and spinal nerves, which consist of bundles of nerve fibers (or axons), conduct information to and from the CNS. Although the nerves are surrounded by fibrous sheaths as they run to different parts of the body, they are relatively unprotected and are commonly damaged by trauma.

**Autonomic Nervous System**

The autonomic nervous system (ANS) is the part of the nervous system that innervates the body's involuntary structures, such as the heart, smooth muscle, and glands. It is distributed throughout the CNS and PNS and is divided into two parts, the sympathetic and the parasympathetic, both containing afferent and efferent nerve fibers. The activities of the sympathetic part of the ANS prepare the body for an emergency, whereas those of the parasympathetic part are aimed at conserving and restoring energy.

**MAJOR DIVISIONS OF THE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM**

Before proceeding to a detailed description of the spinal cord and brain, understanding the main features of these structures and their general relationship to one another is essential (Table 1-1).
Figure 1-2  A: The protective covering of the spinal cord, the meninges, is formed by dura, arachnoid, and pia mater. The space between the arachnoid and pial membranes is called the subarachnoid space and contains cerebrospinal fluid (CSF). The subarachnoid space is enlarged at the cisterna magna and chiasmatic cistern. B: In the cranium, the dura consists of fused periosteal and meningeal layers that separate to form dural sinuses. Arachnoid mater projects into the dural venous sinuses to drain CSF from the subarachnoid space. (From Siegel, A., & Sapru, H. N. [2015]. Essential neuroscience [3rd ed.]. Baltimore, MD: Wolters Kluwer.)
Spinal Cord

The spinal cord is situated within the vertebral canal of the vertebral column and is surrounded by three meninges (Figs. 1-4 and 1-5): the dura mater, the arachnoid mater, and the pia mater. Further protection is provided by the CSF, which surrounds the spinal cord in the subarachnoid space.

The spinal cord is roughly cylindrical and begins superiorly at the foramen magnum in the skull, where it is continuous with the medulla oblongata of the brain. It terminates inferiorly in the lumbar region. Below, the spinal cord tapers off into the conus medullaris, from the apex of which the filum terminale (a prolongation of the pia mater) descends to attach to the back of the coccyx (see Fig. 1-4B).

Along the entire length of the spinal cord, 31 pairs of spinal nerves are attached by the anterior or motor roots and the posterior or sensory roots (Fig. 1-6; also see Fig. 1-5). Each root is attached to the cord by a series of rootlets, which extend the whole length of the corresponding segment of the cord. Each posterior nerve root possesses a posterior root ganglion, the cells of which give rise to peripheral and central nerve fibers.

Spinal Cord Structure

The spinal cord is composed of an inner core of gray matter, which is surrounded by an outer covering of white matter. The gray matter is seen on cross section as an H-shaped pillar with anterior and posterior gray columns, or horns, united by a thin gray commissure containing the small central canal. The white matter, for purposes of description, is divided into anterior, lateral, and posterior white columns (see Fig. 1-6).

Brain

The brain (Fig. 1-7) lies in the cranial cavity and is continuous with the spinal cord through the foramen magnum (see Fig. 1-5A). As shown in Figure 1-2, it is surrounded by the dura mater, the arachnoid mater, and the pia mater. These three meninges are continuous with the corresponding meninges of the spinal cord. The CSF surrounds the brain in the subarachnoid space.

The brain is conventionally divided into three major divisions: the hindbrain, the midbrain, and the forebrain in ascending order from the spinal cord (see Fig. 1-1A). The brainstem (a collective term for the
Hindbrain
The hindbrain comprises the **medulla oblongata**, the **pons**, and the **cerebellum**.

**Medulla Oblongata**
The medulla oblongata is conical in shape and connects the pons superiorly to the spinal cord inferiorly (Fig. 1-8). It contains many collections of neurons, called **nuclei**, and serves as a conduit for ascending and descending nerve fibers.

**Pons**
The pons is situated on the anterior surface of the cerebellum, inferior to the midbrain and superior to the medulla oblongata (Fig. 1-9; also see Fig. 1-8). The pons, or bridge, derives its name from the large number of transverse fibers on its anterior aspect connecting the two cerebellar hemispheres. It also contains many nuclei and ascending and descending nerve fibers.
Figure 1-5  A: Brain, spinal cord, spinal nerve roots, and spinal nerves as seen on their posterior aspect. B: Transverse section through the thoracic region of the spinal cord showing the anterior and posterior roots of a spinal nerve and the meninges. C: Posterior view of the lower end of the spinal cord and cauda equina showing their relationship with the lumbar vertebrae, sacrum, and coccyx.
Figure 1-6 A: Transverse section through the lumbar part of the spinal cord, oblique view. B: Transverse section through the lumbar part of the spinal cord, face view, showing the anterior and posterior roots of a spinal nerve.

Figure 1-7 Lateral view of the brain within the skull.