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Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery

Surgical Anatomy and its Applications

Second Edition

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I dedicate this second edition to my whole family—my wife Dagmar; my children Raquel and Guilherme; my grandchildren Pedro, Helena, and Luisa; my son-in-law Leonardo; and my daughter-in-law Liana—for their unrelenting support. To my father Arno, who has already gone, and to my mother Ada, who despite her advanced age keeps fighting for life.
Contents

Videos Menu ...................................................................................................................... xii
Foreword by Laligam Sekhar .............................................................................................. xiii
Preface ................................................................................................................................. xiv
Acknowledgments .............................................................................................................. xv
Contributors ....................................................................................................................... xvi

Part I. Principles of Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery

1. Anatomy and Osteology of the Skull Base ......................................................... 2
   Carolina Martins, Alvaro Campero, Alexandre Yasuda, Luiz Felipe U. de Alencastro, Shigeyuki Osawa, and Albert L. Rhoton Jr.

2. Anatomy of the Nose, Paranasal Sinuses, and Skull Base ......................................... 13

3. Imaging in Endoscopic Paranasal Sinus and Skull Base Surgery: Three-Dimensional Reconstruction .... 35
   Rainer G. Haetinger

4. Preoperative Assessment of Patients with Skull Base Disease: The Role of Nasal Endoscopy .................. 48
   Juan Eugenio Salas-Galicia, Luis Miguel Garza Talaman, Paulina Andrade Lozano, Raúl Omar Cadena Torrero, and María Chávez Méndez

5. Transnasal Surgical Approaches to Skull Base Lesions ............................................. 59
   Eduardo de Arnaldo S. Vellutini, Marcos de Queiroz Teles Gomes, Matheus Fernandes de Oliveira, Leonardo Balsalobre, João Manussi-Gomes, and Aldo C. Stamm

6. Anesthesia for Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery .......................... 67
   Nelson Mizumoto

7. The Endoscopically Assisted Bimanual Operating Technique ................................... 74
   Daniel B. Simmen and Hans Rudolf Briner

8. How to Improve Endoscopic Surgical Field Quality: Tips and Pearls ......................... 85
   Brian C. Lobo, Pablo F. Recinos, Varun R. Kshettry, Troy D. Woodard, and Raj Sindwani

9. Endoscopic Transnasal Approaches to the Skull Base and Brain: Classification and its Applications .... 93
   Carl H. Snyderman, Eric W. Wang, Juan C. Fernandez-Miranda, and Paul A. Gardner

10. Postoperative Care Following Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery .......... 104
    Garret W. Choby and Peter H. Hwang

11. Technical Advances in Endoscopic Surgery for the Skull Base and Brain .................... 110

Part II. Management of the Paranasal Sinuses in Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery

12. Approaches to the Maxillary Sinus/Medial Maxillectomy: Surgical Anatomy .................. 122
    Nobuyoshi Otori, Kiyoshi Yanagi, and Tsuguhisa Nakayama

13. Approaches to the Ethmoid Sinus .............................................................................. 132
    Arjun K. Parasher and David W. Kennedy

14. Management of the Frontal Sinus .............................................................................. 136
    Luis Fernando Macías-Valle and Peter-John Wormald
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Part III. Transnasal Endoscopic Approach to the Orbit and Optic Nerve**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Transnasal Endoscopic Surgical Anatomy of the Orbit and Optic Nerve</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>Paolo Castelnuovo, Apostolos Karligkiotis, Giacomo Pietrobon, Davide Locatelli, Paolo Battaglia, and Mario Turri-Zanoni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Transnasal Endoscopic Orbit and Optic Nerve Decompressions</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>Benjamin S. Bleier and Sarina K. Müller</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Transnasal Endoscopic Approach to Orbital and Periorbital Diseases</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>Rahuram Sivasubramaniam, Catherine Banks, and Raymond Sacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Transorbital Neuroendoscopic Surgery of the Skull Base and Brain</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>Kris S. Moe and Darlene E. Lubbe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part IV. Transnasal Endoscopic Transcribriform Approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Transnasal Endoscopic Cranietectomy for Esthesioneuroblastomas</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>Aldo C. Stamm, Camila S. Dassi, João Mangussi-Gomes, Leonardo Balsalobre, and Eduardo de Arnaldo S. Vellutini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Skull Base Meningiomas: Transnasal Endoscopic versus Open Transcranial Approaches</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>Ehab El Refaee and Henry W. S. Schroeder</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part V. Transnasal Endoscopic Transplanum/Transtuberculum Approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Endonasal Endoscopic Transplanum/Transtuberculum Approach: Surgical Anatomy (Step by Step) and Technical Nuances</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>Stefan Lieber, Wei-Hsin Wang, Maximiliano Núñez, Solomon C. Cohen, and Juan C. Fernandez-Miranda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Transnasal Endoscopic Transplanum/Transtuberculum Approach in Pituitary Adenomas</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>Diego Mazzatenta, Matteo Zoli, Giorgio Frank, and Ernesto Pasquini</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part VI. Transnasal Endoscopic Sellar and Parasellar Approaches**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
<th>Authors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Pituitary Stalk Lesions</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>Julio Abucham and Ticiana Paes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>The Eyebrow Approach</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>Reid Hoshide and Charles Teo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>A Brief Historical Background and Evolution of Pituitary Surgery</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>Edward R. Laws Jr. and Ian F. Dunn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
32. Microsurgical and Endoscopic Anatomy of the Sellar and Parasellar Regions ........................................ 300
   Carolina Martins, Alexandre Yasuda, Alvaro Campero, Luiz Felipe U. de Alencastro, Kohei Inoue, and Albert L. Rhoton Jr.

33. Endoscopic Surgical Anatomy of the Cavernous Sinus ................................................................. 313
   Stefan Lieber and Juan C. Fernandez-Miranda

34. Sellar and Parasellar Lesions ................................................................................................... 325
   Shunya Hanakita, Schahrazed Bouazza, Moujahed Labidi, Kentaro Watanabe, Anne-Laure Bernat, and Sébastien Froelich

35. Surgical Indications for Pituitary Tumors .................................................................................... 338
   Marcello D. Bronstein

36. The Dos and Don’ts of Pituitary Surgery .................................................................................. 341
   Dharambir S. Sethi, Narayan Janakiram, Shilpee Bhatia Sharma, and Chris Rataphol Dhennorrarat

37. Endoscopic Approaches to the Pituitary Gland ..................................................................... 355
   Aldo C. Stamm, André F. Gentil, João Mangussi-Gomes, João T. Alves-Belo, Leonardo Balsalobre, and Eduardo de Arnaldo S. Vellutini

38. Hy droscopy: Application to Pituitary Surgery ............................................................................. 362
   Theodore A. Schuman and Brent A. Senior

39. Transnasal Endoscopic Approaches to the Cavernous Sinus ................................................. 367
   Aldo C. Stamm, João Mangussi-Gomes, Huy Q. Truong, Tiago F. Scopel, and Eduardo de Arnaldo S. Vellutini

40. Transsellar/Transdorsum Approach to the Interpeduncular Cistern: Pituitary Transposition ...... 374
   Douglas A. Hardesty, Ala S. Montaser, Amin B. Kassam, Ricardo L. Carrau, and Daniel M. Prevedello

Part VII. Transnasal Endoscopic Transclival Surgery

41. Endoscopic Anatomy of the Clivus and Posterior Fossa and its Surgical Applications ............... 384
   Luigi Maria Cavallo, Isabella Esposito, Matteo G. De Notaris, Felice Esposito, Manfred Tschabitscher, Domenico Solari, and Paolo Cappabianca

42. Endoscopic Transnasal Cranietomy to the Clivus and Posterior Fossa ....................................... 396
   João Mangussi-Gomes, André Beer-Furlan, Edinson Najera, Tiago F. Scopel, Leonardo Balsalobre, Eduardo de Arnaldo S. Vellutini, and Aldo C. Stamm

Part VIII. Transnasal Endoscopic Transmaxillary/Transpterygoid/Infratemporal Fossa Approaches

43. Anatomy of the Pterygopalatine, Temporal, and Infratemporal Fossae ............................................. 406
   Maria Peris-Celda, Carlos D. Pinheiro-Neto, and Albert L. Rhoton Jr.

44. Pterygopalatine Fossa and Infratemporal Fossa Surgery: Endoscopic Anatomy ......................... 413
   Rowan Valentine and Peter-John Wormald

45. Transnasal Endoscopic Transethmoid–Pterygoid–Sphenoid Approach ........................................ 421
   Davide Locatelli, Fabio Pozzi, Apostolos Karligkiotis, Mario Turri-Zamoni, Jacopo Zacchi, and Paolo Castelnuovo

46. Transnasal Endoscopic Surgery for Juvenile Nasopharyngeal Angiofibromas ....................... 429
   Suat Kilic, Wayne D. Hsueh, Michael J. Pfisterer, James K. Liu, and Jean Anderson Eloy

47. Endoscopic Targeted Approach to Juvenile Nasopharyngeal Angiofibromas Based Upon a New Classification System ......................................................... 437
   Narayanan Janakiram, Shilpee Bhatia Sharma, and Onkar Deshmukh

48. Transmaxillary Endoscopic Approach to Contralateral Parasellar Lesions ................................ 446
   Luiz Felipe U. de Alencastro, Luiz Carlos de Alencastro, Carolina Martins, Ademir Lodetti, Alberto Carlos Capel Cardoso, Mário de Barros Faria, Kohei Inoue, Shigeysuki Osawa, and Albert L. Rhoton Jr.
Contents

Part IX. Transnasal Endoscopic Approach to the Petrous Apex and Meckel’s Cave

49. Petrous Apex: Surgical Anatomy and Approaches .................................................. 458
Nadim Khoueir, Benjamin Verillaud, Sebastien Froelich, Damien Bresson, and Philippe Herman

50. Meckel’s Cave: Anterior Endoscopic Approaches and Surgical Anatomy .................. 467
Enrique Iturriaga Casanova, Juan Carlos Rodriguez, and Huy Q. Truong

51. Transnasal Endoscopic Suprapetrous Approach to the Meckel’s Cave and Temporal Fossa ........ 474
Douglas A. Hardesty, Daniel M. Prevedello, Amin B. Kassam, Ricardo L. Carrau, and Alexandre B. Todeschini

52. Endoscopic Dissection of the Petrocavernous Carotid Artery: The Key for Petrocival Surgery .... 479
Gretchen M. Oakley and Richard J. Harvey

Part X. Transnasal Endoscopic Surgery for Sinus and Skull Base Malignancies

53. General Concepts in Sinus and Skull Base Malignancies ........................................ 488
Ehab Y. Hanna and Ahmed Salama Abdelmeguid

54. Transnasal Endoscopic Surgery for Malignancies of the Sinus and Skull Base .................. 503
Paolo Castelnuovo, Mario Tumi-Zaonon, Alessia Lambertoni, Paolo Battaglia, and Apostolos Karligkiotis

55. Combined Cranioendoscopic Approaches to Sinus and Skull Base Malignancies .............. 509
Davide Mattavelli, Vittorio Rampinelli, Davide Lancini, and Piero Nicolai

56. External versus Endoscopic Approaches for Skull Base Malignancies ......................... 516
Valerie J. Lund and David J. Howard

57. Endoscopic Transnasal Nasopharyngectomy: Anatomy and its Surgical Applications ......... 523
Ronaldo Nunes Toledo, Paula Angélica Lorenzon Silveira, Renan Bezerra Lira, and Luiz Paulo Kowalski

58. Transnasal Endoscopic Treatment of Pterygopalatine Fossa and Infratemporal Fossa Malignancies . 534
Ing Ping Tang and Prepageran Narayanan

Part XI. Transnasal Endoscopic Craniocervical Junction Surgery

59. Microscopic and Endoscopic Anatomy of the Craniovertebral Junction ...................... 542
Alberto Carlos Capel Cardoso, Roger S. Brock, Carolina Martins, Luiz Felipe U. de Alencastro, and Albert L. Rhoton Jr.

60. The Craniovertebral Junction: Transnasal Endoscopic Approach ................................ 550
Theodore A. Schuman, Cristine Klatt-Cromwell, Brian D. Thorp, and Adam M. Zanation

Part XII. Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery in Children

61. Transnasal Endoscopic Surgery of the Skull Base and Brain in Children: Anatomical Particularities ... 558
Maria Peris-Celda, Carlos D. Pinheiro-Neto, and Albert L. Rhoton Jr.

62. Transnasal Endoscopic Approach to the Skull Base and Brain in Children ..................... 563
Felipe Marconato, Leonardo Balsalobre, Camila S. Dassi, João Mangussi-Gomes, Eduardo de Amaldo S. Vellutini, and Aldo C. Stamm

Part XIII. Ventral Skull Base Cerebrospinal Fluid Leaks and Meningo/Encephaloceles

63. Transnasal Endoscopic Management of Ventral Skull Base Cerebrospinal Fluid Leaks and
Meningoencephaloceles ................................................................. 572
Arjun K. Parasher, Alan D. Workman, and James N. Palmer

64. Managing Sphenoid Lateral Recess Cerebrospinal Fluid Leaks .................................... 580
Alfredo José Herrera Vivas, Javier Andrés Ospina, Carolina Wuesthoff, and Ricardo L. Carrau
Part XIV. Complications in Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery

65. Nasal and Paranasal Sinuses Complications after Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery .......................................................... 590
Marcio Nakanishi, Leonardo Balsalobre, João Mangussi-Gomes, Eduardo de Arnaldo S. Vellutini, and Aldo C. Stamm

66. Skull Base Reconstruction: An Overview .................................................. 595
João Mangussi-Gomes, Aldo C. Stamm, Carl H. Snyderman, Juan C. Fernandez-Miranda, Paul A. Gardner, and Eric W. Wang

67. Management of Skull Base Defects with Vascularized Flaps ..................... 604
Gustavo Hadad, Luis Bassagaisteguy, Miguel Mural, João Mangussi-Gomes, and Aldo C. Stamm

68. External Procedures for Repairing Skull Base Defects after Transnasal Endoscopic Surgery .... 611
Aldo C. Stamm, Ricardo L. Carrau, Guilherme Cardinali Barreiro, João Mangussi-Gomes, João T. Alves-Belo, and Daniel F. Kelly

69. Management of Internal Carotid Artery Injury During Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base Surgery .............................................................. 622
Douglas A. Hardesty, Daniel M. Prevedello, Amin B. Kassam, Ricardo L. Carrau, and Alexandre B. Todeschini

70. Dealing with Small Arteries and Perforators in Transnasal Endoscopic Surgery .......... 627
Eduardo de Arnaldo S. Vellutini, Marcos de Queiraz Teles Gomes, Matheus Fernandes de Oliveira, Leonardo Balsalobre, João Mangussi-Gomes, and Aldo C. Stamm

71. Endocrine Complications Following Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery .................. 635
Luma Ghalib and Lawrence S. Kirschner

72. Successful Management of Endoscopic Skull Base Complications ................ 640

Index ............................................................................................................ 647
Videos Menu

**Video 13.1** Ethmoidectomy in skull base surgery.

**Video 14.1** Step-by-step frontal drill-out procedure.

**Video 15.1** The combined transtemporal/transnasal approach to the sphenoid sinus for resection of a pituitary adenoma.

**Video 18.1** Left medial and inferior endoscopic orbital decompression with inferomedial strut preservation in a patient with dysthyroid orbitopathy.

**Video 22.1** Transnasal endoscopic resection of an esthesioneuroblastoma.

**Video 23.1** Endoscopic endonasal approach to an olfactory groove meningioma.

**Video 26.1** Endoscopic endonasal transplanum transtuberculum approach for the resection of a large suprasellar craniopharyngioma.

**Video 27.1** Endoscopic endonasal resection of tuberculum sella meningioma.

**Video 36.1** The endoscopic endonasal resection of a pituitary adenoma.

**Video 37.1** Endoscopic endonasal resection of a functioning pituitary adenoma.

**Video 38.1** Use of “hydroscopy” to assist in endoscopic surgery of the pituitary.

**Video 39.1** Transnasal endoscopic resection of a recurrent non-functioning pituitary adenoma.

**Video 42.1** Transnasal endoscopic approaches to the clivus and posterior fossa: presentation of three complex cases.

**Video 44.1** Endoscopic resection of a right pterygopalatine fossa juvenile angiofibroma involving the infratemporal fossa.

**Video 46.1** Video depicting a multi-corridor endoscopic approach for resection of a right juvenile nasopharyngeal angiofibroma with infratemporal fossa extension.

**Video 47.1** Endoscopic endonasal approach for a juvenile nasopharyngeal angiofibroma.

**Video 51.1** This video shows an endoscopic endonasal approach to a trigeminal schwannoma. The patient presented with numbness on the right side of his face. Investigation revealed a large, heterogeneously enhancing mass centered on Meckel’s cave. Careful analysis of the images showed the mass to protrude into the lateral recesses of the sphenoid sinus, anterior to the internal carotid artery, favoring an endoscopic endonasal approach. A transtemporal approach, using the vidian canal to locate the anterior genu of the carotid artery was performed. Using a microdoppler probe to identify the ICA and neuro-stimulation to avoid any motor fibers of V3, we opened the dura and carefully resected the tumor. Postoperative images showed a complete resection of the lesion. After 6 months, sensation on the patient’s face had returned to normal.

**Video 54.1** Clinical case of anterior skull base malignant tumor management. A 74-year-old woman presented with left epistaxis, nasal obstruction, and headache. CT and MR scans revealed a bulky lesion involving the left nasal fossa, ethmoid sinus and orbit. Biopsy of the lesion revealed a sinonasal undifferentiated carcinoma. A total body PET-CT scan excluded systemic dissemination of the disease. The patient underwent induction chemotherapy (5 cycles), with partial response (regression of the intraorbital component of the tumor). A combined approach (cranio-endoscopic) was performed, and free-margins were obtained. Finally, the patient underwent adjuvant radiotherapy (surgical field – 60 Gy; elective neck – 54 Gy) with intensity modulated technique (IMRT). After 27 months of follow-up, the patient is alive with no evidence of disease.

**Video 57.1** Transnasal endoscopic nasopharyngectomy for a squamous cell carcinoma.

**Video 69.1** This video demonstrates an endoscopic endonasal approach to patient with a chordoma, whom had had previous surgeries and proton beam therapy. Knowing that the Internal Carotid Artery was involved by tumor, the approach was done carefully, using neuronavigation guidance and microdoppler probe to identify the ICA. Despite the precautions taken, when removing tumor from behind the ICA using a blunt ball probe, the ICA ruptured and large-volume, brisk bleeding is seen. The bleeding is controlled in the OR using a muscle patch and tamponade and the patient is immediately taken to the angio-suite. Stenting the artery was not possible and the ICA had to be occluded. Fortunately, this patient had good contralateral flow and did not have an ischemic insult nor required bypass.
Foreword

From humble beginnings about 20 years ago the disciplines of endoscopic skull base surgery and endoscopic cranial surgery have grown considerably and now encompass a large volume of surgical cases in both specialties. This idea of “minimally invasive surgery” has grown and blossomed. However, the correct terminology is “minimal access surgery,” since through a small opening, very extensive surgery may be performed. Similar to other cranial base and cranial approaches, this type of surgery can also produce severe complications occasionally, which in some patients may be difficult to manage due to the small opening. The endoscopes, the display systems, and instruments we use for this surgery are still in their infancy and are still developing. The use of robotic and artificial intelligence technologies will have a great impact on this field in future. Like other types of surgery, an excellent understanding of the anatomy, especially as seen through the endoscope, is needed. In many cases, neuronavigation is extremely useful. Observation and learning with master surgeons who have perfected these techniques is essential for young surgeons who wish to enter this field of surgery.

Professor Aldo Stamm is now an internationally recognized expert in the area of endonasal and skull base surgery. He has done significant pioneering work in this field, and also has a track record of working collaboratively with neurosurgery and other disciplines to achieve optimal patient outcomes. In this book, he has masterfully assembled a team of international collaborators who have presented different aspects to endoscopic cranial base and cranial surgery. The book is well organized into 14 sections and is very readable. All aspects of the surgery, including instrumentation, anatomy, operative technique, and potential complications are well covered. I strongly recommend this book to any junior surgeon who wishes to pursue this field. I thank Prof. Stamm and his contributors for this valuable addition to our knowledge.

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Preface

This second edition is an extension of our first, as new technologies and improvements of the transnasal endoscopic skull base and brain surgery have undergone a remarkable evolution in recent years. New topics were incorporated aiming at including a much larger number of clinical entities. The development of more ergonomic and precise surgical instruments, such as the bipolar coagulation systems, special tweezers and scissors, and new hemostatic agents has allowed a safer and more effective treatment of lesions that affect this complex region of the human body.

The main focus of this second edition is the correlation between the skull base anatomy as seen from the endonasal perspective and its surgical applications. To achieve this objective, we invited leading experts on the subject from all over the world, making this book a multicentric and multidisciplinary one, since many medical specialties are involved, especially neurosurgery, otorhinolaryngology, head and neck surgery, neuroendocrinology, intensive care, neuro-anesthesiology, among others. Thus, our colleagues will be able to appreciate the experience of different groups in what is best in the field of the transnasal endoscopic surgery of the skull base and brain.

Each chapter is provided with a summary and chapter highlights, which facilitates and illustrates beforehand what is most significant in the chapter. We also added to this edition a series of videos from different institutions, therefore contributing to a better understanding of the described techniques.

I wish you all a great and enjoyable reading!

Aldo C. Stamm, MD, PhD
Acknowledgments

This project is the result of hard work and commitment. First, I would like to thank all authors and collaborators who have made it possible to carry out this project, for all their effort and dedication. I would like to thank the staff at Thieme Publishers, especially Mr. Timothy Hiscock, who greatly encouraged and believed in the publishing of this second edition. I would also like to thank Mr. J. Owen Zurhellen and Ms. Mary Wilson for their constant help and guidance.

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Thanks to Dr. Eduardo A. Vellutini, a great partner in the skull base surgeries, present in the good and bad moments, always encouraging the development and improvement of this type of surgery, pushing its limits beyond the early standards.

My special thanks to Dr. João Mangussi-Gomes, a great friend and co-editor of this book, for his untiring and dedicated work in taking and revising the chapters of this edition, so they would become more attractive and educational.

I would also like to thank Dr. Leonardo Balsalobre and Dr. Marcos Queiroz Gomes for their friendship and dedication to all patients undergoing this type of surgery, and to my fellows and residents, old and new, for their constant help and follow-up of our patients.

And finally, my deepest thanks to my family for their support, patience, and encouragement during all these more than 30 years dedicated to this complex and difficult branch of medicine.
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# Part I

Principles of Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Anatomy and Osteology of the Skull Base</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Anatomy of the Nose, Paranasal Sinuses, and Skull Base</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Imaging in Endoscopic Paranasal Sinus and Skull Base Surgery: Three-Dimensional Reconstruction</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Preoperative Assessment of Patients with Skull Base Disease: The Role of Nasal Endoscopy</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Transnasal Surgical Approaches to Skull Base Lesions</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Anesthesia for Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The Endoscopically Assisted Bimanual Operating Technique</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>How to Improve Endoscopic Surgical Field Quality: Tips and Pearls</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Endoscopic Transnasal Approaches to the Skull Base and Brain: Classifications and its Applications</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Postoperative Care Following Transnasal Endoscopic Skull Base and Brain Surgery</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Technical Advances in Endoscopic Surgery for the Skull Base and Brain</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1 Anatomy and Osteology of the Skull Base

Carolina Martins, Alvaro Campero, Alexandre Yasuda, Luiz Felipe U. de Alencastro, Shigeyuki Osawa, and Albert L. Rhoton Jr.

Summary
This chapter reviews the bony architecture of the anterior, middle, and posterior skull base. Relying on a series of dry skull images, this anatomy is explained through a progressive disassembly of the skull base. This approach allows introduction of concepts on the corresponding exo- and endocranial divisions of each of the cranial fossae and relevant surgical notions as the formation of the center and lateral corridors of the skull base.

Keywords: skull base, skull base anatomy, osteology, endoscopic skull base surgery

Key Points
- Each skull base area has a center, or midline portion, and two lateral parts.
- The center areas are lined up as a corridor, whereas the lateral parts radiate from the skull base center.
- On the endocranial side, the center surgical corridor comprises, from anterior to posterior, (1) the cribriform area; (2) planum; (3) sellae; (4) clivus; and (5) craniovertebral junction.
- On the exocranial side, the center surgical corridor comprises (1) the nasal cavity; (2) the sphenoid sinus; and (3) the pharynx, which enable surgical access to the corresponding endocranial areas.
- In the center surgical corridor, the anterior, middle, and posterior skull base areas are close together and bridged by the sphenoid body.

1.1 Introduction
Understanding the osteology of the skull base is a fundamental step in skull base surgery. It enables accurate topographic location and helps tailor surgical routes to specific skull base areas. This chapter reviews the bony architecture of the anterior, middle, and posterior skull base.

1.2 General Anatomy
The skull is divided into the cranium and facial skeleton. The cranium in its turn is divided into calvaria, which is the domelike superior portion of the cranium, formed by the frontal, parietal, and squamous parts of the occipital and temporal bones and greater sphenoid wings, and the cranial base. The cranial base is formed by the occipital, temporal, ethmoid, and frontal bone arranged around, and connected by, a center element: the sphenoid bone.

The cranial base has an endocranial surface, which faces the brain and is naturally divided into anterior, middle, and posterior fossae (► Fig. 1.1), and an exocranial surface (► Fig. 1.2), which faces the nasal cavity, sinuses, orbits, pharynx, infratemporal fossae, and pterygopalatine, parapharyngeal, and infrapetrosal spaces.1,2

On the endocranial side of the skull base, the border between the anterior and middle fossa is marked by the sphenoid ridge, joined medially by the chiasmatic sulcus. The border between the middle and posterior fossae is formed by the petrous ridges joining by the dorsum sellae and posterior clinoid processes (► Fig. 1.3).

On the exocranial side, the anterior and middle fossae are divided by a transverse line, extending through the pterygomaxillary fissures and pterygopalatine fossae at the upper level, and the posterior edge of the alveolar processes of the maxillae at a lower level. Medially, this corresponds to the attachment of the vomer to the sphenoid bone. The middle and posterior cranial fossae are separated on each side by a transverse line crossing near the posterior border of the vomer–sphenoid junction, foramen lacerum, carotid canal, jugular foramen, styloid process, and mastoid tip (► Fig. 1.4).
Each of the three skull base areas has a center and two lateral parts. The center parts are arranged as a midline corridor and comprise, on the endocranial side, the cribriform area, planum, sellae, clivus, and craniovertebral junction. On the exocranial side, the center corridor encompasses the nasal cavity, sphenoid sinus, and the pharynx.

In the center corridor, the anterior, middle, and posterior skull base areas are close together and bridged by the body of the sphenoid.

### 1.3 Anatomy of the Anterior Skull Base

The anterior endocranial surface is formed by the combination of three bones: frontal, ethmoid, and sphenoid (Fig. 1.5). The orbital plates of the frontal bones form most of the lateral parts of this fossa, are the roof of the orbital cavities, and give support to the dura and orbital gyri of the frontal lobe. The medial gap between the orbital plates is filled by the bony nasal septum, which is formed by the vomer and perpendicular plate of the ethmoid.

On the endocranial side of the skull base, the border between the anterior and middle fossa is marked by the sphenoid ridge, joined medially by the chiasmatic sulcus (dotted light blue line), and the border between the middle and posterior fossae is formed by the petrous ridges joined by the dorsum sellae and posterior clinoid processes (dotted dark blue line). Ac.: acoustic; Ant.: anterior; Chiasm.: chiasmatic; Clin.: clinoid; For.: foramen; Front.: frontal; Int.: internal; Jug.: jugular; Orb.: orbital; Pet.: petrous; Post.: posterior; Sphen.: sphenoid; Temp.: temporal; Tuberc.: tuberculum.
whereas the lateral plates of the ethmoid bones separate the nasal cavity from each orbit (▶ Fig. 1.7 and ▶ Fig. 1.8).

Some foramina and grooves connect the endocranial and exocranial surfaces and transmit vascular and neural structures in this area. The foramen cecum in the midline serves as the site of passage of an emissary vein; the cribriform plate is pierced by the filaments of the olfactory nerve; the supraorbital grooves, on the superior orbital limits, are related to the frontal branch of the first trigeminal division; the anterior and posterior ethmoidal canals, located along the suture line formed by the frontal and ethmoid bones, transmit the anterior and posterior ethmoidal nerves and arteries; the superior orbital fissure, located between the lesser and greater sphenoidal wings, transmits the superior ophthalmic vein and the first division of the trigeminal, oculomotor, trochlear, and abducens nerves; and the optic canals between the anterior and posterior roots of the anterior clinoid processes transmit the optic nerve and the ophthalmic artery.

1.4 Anatomy of the Middle Skull Base

The endocranial surface of the middle fossa is formed by the sphenoid and temporal bones. The division between these bones usually is not easy to see unless one is focusing on the sphenoid spine, the most posterior prominence of the sphenoid bone, just posterolateral to the foramen spinosum. From this point, it is possible to follow the sphenopetrosal and sphenosquamosal sutures (▶ Fig. 1.9). The middle cranial base has medial and lateral parts. The medial part is formed by the body of the sphenoid, whereas the lateral parts result from the combination of lesser and greater sphenoid wings and squamous and petrous parts of the temporal bone. The medial portion of the middle cranial base is the sellae, whereas the most lateral portions are the temporal fossae. Between these two areas, on each side, are the parasellar regions. The parasellar regions are probably the smallest areas of the skull base with the highest concentration of important neural and vascular structures, as they house the cavernous sinuses.

The sphenoid contributes to the middle fossa mainly with its body, the greater and lesser wings. Laterally, the lesser sphenoid wings form the sphenoid ridges. Medially, the lesser wings are connected to the sphenoid body through the anterior root, and they form the roof of the optic canal and are continuous with the sphenoid planum. At the center of the planum is the sphenoid jugum, a faint ridge, which is the remnant of the fusion of the ossification centers. The posterior root of the anterior clinoid process, also called the optic strut, separates the optic canals above from the superior orbital fissure below. The chiasmatic sulcus is located posterior to the planum. On each side of the chiasmatic sulcus are the endocranial openings of the optic canals. Posteriorly, the chiasmatic sulcus is separated from the sellar cavity by the tuberculum sellae. The posterior limit of the sellae is composed of the dorsum and posterior clinoid processes, which
are the medial boundaries between the middle and posterior cranial fossae (▶ Fig. 1.10).

The greater sphenoid wings contribute to the temporal fossae. Anteriorly, it forms the lateral limit of the superior orbital fissure. The foramen rotundum, which transmits the maxillary division of the trigeminal nerve, is separated from the superior orbital fissure by a bridge of bone, the maxillary strut. The largest opening at the greater sphenoid wing is the foramen ovale, which transmits the optic nerve and ophthalmic artery. The superior orbital fissure is located between the lesser and greater sphenoidal wings on the lateral side of the optic canal. It transmits the oculomotor, trochlear, ophthalmic, and abducens nerves, a recurrent meningeal artery, and the superior and inferior ophthalmic veins. Eth.: ethmoid, ethmoidal; Fiss.: fissure; For.: foramen; Gr.: greater; Lat.: lateral; Less.: lesser; Orb.: orbital; Perp.: perpendicular; Sphen.: sphenoid, sphenoidal; Sup.: superior; Supraorb.: supraorbital; Supratr.: supratrochlear.

might transmit the accessory meningeal artery. The lingula is a protrusion of the sphenoid bone located at the junction of the body and the greater wing. As soon as the carotid artery leaves its canal on the petrous portion of the temporal bone, it is embraced by the lingula, which holds the artery in place and enables it to run along the carotid sulcus on each side of sellae. Anteriorly, the carotid artery rests against the optic strut, in close relationship with the anterior clinoid. The lingula gives attachment to the

Fig. 1.7 The osseous nasal septum is formed by the attachment of the perpendicular plate of the ethmoid and vomer at the sphenoidal crest. Eth.: ethmoid, ethmoidal; Perp.: perpendicular; Sphen.: sphenoid, sphenoidal.
petrolingual ligament, which separates the petrous carotid from the vertical cavernous carotid segment (▶ Fig. 1.11).

The endocranial surfaces of the petrolingual petrous and squamosal parts of the temporal bone also form the middle fossa (▶ Fig. 1.12 and ▶ Fig. 1.13). In this area, the greater petrosal nerve runs into the facial hiatus just medial to the tensor tympani muscle and lateral to the carotid canal. The trigeminal impression, which houses the trigeminal ganglion, is lateral to the petrous apex and posterolateral to the superior opening of the carotid canal.

The exocranial surface of the middle cranial base is also divided into medial and lateral parts (▶ Fig. 1.14 and ▶ Fig. 1.15). The medial part encompasses the sphenoid body and the upper portion of the basal part of the occipital bone and corresponds to the sphenoid sinus and the nasopharynx. The lateral part is formed by the greater sphenoid wing and the lateral pterygoid plate; the petrous, tympanic, squamous, and styloid parts of the temporal bone; and the zygomatic, palatine, and maxillary bones. Between the lateral and medial parts of the middle cranial base, an intermediate part corresponds to the area between the pterygoid plates. This area is inferior to each cavernous sinus and extends from the pterygopalatine fossa anteriorly to the pterygoid fossa posteriorly. The pterygopalatine fossa is located between the posterior wall of the maxillary sinus in the front, the pterygoid process behind, the palatine bone medially, and the body of the sphenoid bone above. The fossa opens laterally through the pterygomaxillary fissure into the infratemporal fossa and medially through the sphenopalatine foramen to the nasal cavity. Both the foramen rotundum for the maxillary nerve and the pterygoid canal for the vidian nerve open through the posterior wall of the fossae formed by the pterygoid process of the sphenoid bone. The palatovaginal canal carrying the pharyngeal nerve and artery and the greater and lesser palatine canals conveying the greater and lesser palatine arteries also open into the pterygopalatine fossa. The inferior orbital fissure, across which the orbital muscle stretches, lies in front of the pterygopalatine fossa.
The lateral part of the middle cranial base that corresponds endocranially to the temporal fossa includes the infratemporal fossa, mandibular fossa, and the parapharyngeal space (Fig. 1.16). The infratemporal fossa is bounded anteriorly by the posterolateral surface of the maxilla and the infratemporal crest, which separates the infratemporal from the superolaterally located temporal fossa. The infratemporal fossa is bounded anteromedially by the lateral pterygoid plate, laterally by the mandibular ramus, and posteriorly by the tympanic part of the temporal bone and styloid process. The pterygopatymal and inferior orbital fissures, the alveolar canals, the foramen spinosum, the ovale, and the emissary sphenoid foramen open into the infratemporal fossa, which is bounded anteriorly by the infratemporal crest, the infratemporal and sphenoidal foramina, and the emissary sphenoidal foramen. The infratemporal fossa is bounded superolaterally by the zygomatic arch, the zygomatic process of the maxilla, and the pterygoid process of the sphenoid bone. The infratemporal fossa is bounded superomedially by the infraorbital foramen and the temporal line. The infratemporal fossa is bounded anteromedially by the anterior and lateral orbital walls. The infratemporal fossa is bounded posteriorly by the posterior wall of the maxillary sinus and the infratemporal crest. The infratemporal fossa is bounded posterolaterally by the lateral pterygoid plate. The infratemporal fossa is bounded posteriorly by the pterygoid plates and the sphenoid sinus. The infratemporal fossa is bounded inferiorly by the body of the sphenoid bone and the pterygoid plates. The infratemporal fossa is bounded inferiorly by the sphenoid sinus and the pterygoid plates. The infratemporal fossa is bounded inferiorly by the pterygoid plates and the sphenoid sinus. The infratemporal fossa is bounded inferiorly by the pterygoid plates and the sphenoid sinus. The infratemporal fossa is bounded inferiorly by the pterygoid plates and the sphenoid sinus.