Lanzino G, Spetzler RF (Eds), Cavernous malformations of the brain and spinal cord

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The first book dedicated to cavernomas has been published in 1993 by Awad and Barrow. The present volume on the same topic gives credit to the fact that a large variety of additional knowledge on that disease has been accomplished within the past 15 years.

The publication is edited by Lanzino and Spetzler and comprises the previous knowledge with most of the actual new insights into the interesting biology of cavernomas. It consists of two major well-organized sections addressing (1) “General Aspects”, and (2) “Clinical Presentation, Indication for Surgery, Surgical Techniques, and Outcome”.

In the first section, the natural history, pathology, (molecular) biology, genetics, neuroradiology and classification are discussed in eloquent chapters. The potential biological relation of cavernomas to capillary teleangiectasias and developmental venous anomalies is also covered by an article. Within the first section, the most interesting new information is given in the chapters on the molecular biology and genetics of cavernomas. Here, the ultrastructure, role of endothelial proliferation, and neoangiogenesis are as well summarized as the role of the so far reported three genes (*CCM1*, *CCM2*, *CCM3*) that are related to the familial cavernoma syndromes. Further useful information is also given about the potential influence of previous radiotherapy on the de novo development of cavernomas

and the possible cutaneous alterations that are sometimes associated mainly with the familial forms of the disease.

The second section of the book describes various considerations as for the different types of localization such as supratentorial, superficial, and deep, as well as brainstem and spinal cavernomas, respectively. Indication for surgery, surgical approaches and technique are well illustrated and described. Further chapters deal with atypical giant and pediatric cavernomas. A very nice part discusses the surgical treatment of epilepsy as the main clinical symptom of cortically located supratentorial cavernomas, before the last chapter addresses the potential therapeutic role of radiosurgery, a treatment option that at least in our humble understanding should not be performed.

The only objectionable points to discuss are the quality of some of the figures which are generally of a high resolution but lack color printing, particularly for some neuropathological and intraoperative photographs. Although by far not complete, the most recent literature is adequately cited in the majority of the chapters.

In summary, the present book belongs in any vascular neurosurgeons bookshelf and might also be of interest for scientists interested in the biology of cavernous malformations because it very well summarizes all necessary information on this pathology.

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