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**Lumbar Spine Syndromes
Evaluation and Treatment**

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Preface

The question facing anyone contemplating a book on low back pain is: Why write another book? It is certainly true that there are many books on this topic addressing a wide variety of audiences. Some books are all inclusive and scholarly in nature, others are personal descriptions of diagnostic and treatment philosophies. This book is a combination of these two extremes. It represents our views on the low back problem, supported by scientific data. Most aspects on back pain presented in this book can be found in other texts. The organization of the material is unique, however.

Our approach is to start by listening to and looking at the patient. It becomes apparent, then, that patients can be classified into one of the syndromes described in chapters 4 through 13. We believe that this syndrome classification, which is quite simple to make clinically, will allow you to diagnose and treat your patients more effectively. To set the stage for the syndrome chapters the first three chapters of the book are generic to the remaining chapters. They review the epidemiology, pathology, biomechanics, etiologic theory, diagnostic methods, and treatment modalities applicable to the low back syndromes. They should be read before the syndrome chapters. At the end of the book you will find four chapters that are specific to disease entities. They were included to allow a separate discussion of this small, but important, group of diseases with symptoms and signs common to the lumbar spinal syndromes, but with specific diagnostic requirements, treatment and prognosis.

This book is not intended for the super specialist. Rather, it should be helpful to physicians, of different specialities, who deal with back pain patients as part of their practices, and to the medical resident who wishes to understand the principles of back pain management.

Many have supported our efforts. In particular we express our gratitude to Robert N. Hensinger, M.D., who wrote the chapter on back pain in children. Glen D. Dobben, M.D., provided invaluable assistance in writing the section on imaging techniques. Ms. Judith Weik did the artwork expertly with superb artistic finesse. Mrs. Dorothy Bell typed, retyped and retyped cheerfully and carefully.

Finally we wish to thank our families who supported us. The time it took to complete our effort cannot be replaced.

G. B. J. Andersson and T. W. McNeill

Contents

Introduction	1
Investigations (<i>in collaboration with G. D. Dobben</i>).	29
Treatment modalities	53
The patient with acute low back pain	65
The patient with recurrent low back pain.	72
The patient with pain radiating down the leg	76
The patient with severe unremitting lower back pain	87
The patient with lower back pain, sciatica, and inability to void	93
The patient with lower back pain and leg pain with walking	100
The patient with chronic low back pain	109
The adult patient with spine deformity and low back pain	118
Back pain in children (<i>contributed by R. N. Hensinger</i>)	125
The patient with functional disease/malingering	153
The patient with a spine tumor	163
The patient with spinal infection	169
The patient with inflammatory spine disease	179
The patient with metabolic bone disease and low back pain.	185
References	193
Subject index	209