

## Preface

For many years, we have enjoyed a close collaboration between a radiology department equipped with every modern diagnostic imaging modality and an orthopedics department with expertise in spinal disorder. This has resulted in an extensive collection of images relating to lumbar intervertebral disk disease and spinal stenosis, which we consider worthy of publication.

At first, diskography, conventional myelography, and CT were the imaging modalities of choice. In recent years, however, MRI has become increasingly important in the diagnostic evaluation of lumbar intervertebral disk disease and spinal stenosis. In our center, this noninvasive technique has largely supplanted all other imaging modalities with respect to these disease entities.

The purpose of this atlas is not only to present images with a high information content, but also to show that nonsurgical, minimally invasive procedures are just as much a part of the therapeutic repertoire of the orthopedics and radiology department as are open disk operations and the surgical decompression of spi-

nal stenosis. By making use of this broad range of therapeutic options and cooperating closely with the radiologists, the treating orthopedist is able to make an exact diagnosis and to establish a precisely defined treatment indication for each patient. This is especially true for image-guided and minimally invasive procedures.

We would like to thank all of our colleagues who have enabled us to compile this extensive collection of images. We also extend our thanks to the staff of Georg Thieme Verlag for the superb design of the book.

It is our hope that this atlas will be of help to all colleagues in solving diagnostic and therapeutic problems relating to degenerative changes in the lumbar spine, and that it will permit a wider appreciation of the value of MRI in this area, to the benefit of the patients.

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