

The notion of using a robot to conduct surgery conjures up a wide variety of images particularly in the minds of patients and prospective patients who are seeking the best operation. For surgeons, robotics, currently, connotes but a single image but provokes many an opinion about its good, bad and ugly. Regardless of whether you are an adopter or convert to robotics, a newbie just beginning to drive the robotic console or a naysayer dismissing the value of robotics, this new textbook, *Robotic Thoracic Surgery: A Collection of Clinical Pearls*, provides a practical and insightful review of robotic approaches to thoracic surgical diseases.

This collection of articles has been collated from the many publications of the AME Publishing Company including two special issues in the *Journal of Visualized Surgery*. One on robotic surgery with Dr. Robert J. Cerfolio as guest editor and one on robotic surgery for lung resection with Dr. Alper Toker as guest editor. Authors of these chapters come from many countries around the world including Italy, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States, Netherlands, Russia, Hong Kong, Austria, and Japan—a testament to the worldwide interest in robotic surgery.

The hope in combining articles on similar topics from several authors is that this will be an educational platform for young surgeons to learn about different techniques and approaches to robotic thoracic surgery. Additionally, for the expert surgeon the sharing of different approaches and techniques hopefully will inspire further discussion or innovation of the current techniques. For example in the first section on thymectomy, Dr. Marulli and colleagues present a left sided approach to robotic thymectomy while Dr. Suda looks to move from the unilateral approach to a more central viewpoint via the subxyphoid location to approach thymectomy.

This theme of differing robotic approaches is repeated in the section on esophagectomy where Ivor Lewis and transhiatal esophagectomy approaches on the robot are presented. And, repeated again in the section are various approaches to pulmonary resection but it is taken further with discussion and viewpoints from experts on transitioning from VATS lobectomy to acceptance of minimally invasive surgery.

While it is my honor and pleasure to provide the preface (and a chapter) to this textbook, the selection of articles and organization of the chapters has been the hard work of Dr. Qingquan Luo from the Shanghai Chest Hospital. Together with the team from AME Publishing Company, they have assembled an outstanding set of papers from leading surgeons on robotic surgery that represent the current state of the art. I hope that you'll enjoy reading these papers as I did.

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