Minimally invasive spine surgery

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SINCE its inception, minimally invasive spine surgery has been a field in evolution. The modernization of tools and techniques for minimally invasive surgery (MIS) has recently enabled spine surgeons to expand patient selection and candidacy to include a growing array of spinal disorders such as degenerative disc disease and herniation, fractures, tumors, infections, instability, and deformity. Despite an expanding literature database, many traditional spine surgeons remain skeptical of the role for MIS in the spine. This skepticism is in part due to the lack of substantial prospective randomized trials comparing

open and minimally invasive techniques in a scholarly fashion. The potential benefits of MIS include limited blood loss, decreased postoperative narcotics, reduced hospital stay, and quicker return to work. A prominent role has emerged for MIS techniques as a mainstay in the modern day treatment of spinal disorders.

This issue of *Neurosurgical Focus* is intended to provide the means to share the vast knowledge and experience gained by contemporary spine surgeons who have negotiated the learning curve of minimally invasive spine surgery techniques.