Endoscopy in neurosurgery

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During the last 2 decades endoscopy and its main instrument, the endoscope, have significantly changed some areas of neurosurgery and made possible new others. As a matter of fact, the possibility now exists for neurosurgeons to access deep, hidden, and sometimes formidable areas of the nervous system thanks to light transmission, panoramic views, and angled lines of sight brought by the endoscope. These features have dramatically burst open the repertoire of neuroendoscopic techniques that are now being commonly performed for pathologies within the cranial compartment, skull base, spinal cord, and peripheral nerves. In fact, the management of some neurosurgical disorders has been redefined with new standards. While the technological breakthrough has been profound, there remain substantial hurdles in advancing the field of endoscopic neurosurgery, most notably global neurosurgical training and equipment innovation. Even with these limitations, it is certain that the integration of endoscopic techniques in neurosurgery is permanent and indispensable. We hope you enjoy this issue of Neurosurgical Focus. (DOI: 10.3171/2011.4.FOCUS.Intro)