

Preface

We have at our disposal a number of excellent methods for learning about the latest research and developments in spine surgery: journals, textbooks, symposia, DVDs, and the internet provide us with numerous opportunities for education. Having said this, do we need one more publication?

We feel the answer is yes. This series, *Roundtables in Spine Surgery* will fill a need in an area of surgical education that is not well addressed by the other available educational modalities. *Roundtables* will cover the basics and essentials of spine surgery in a new educational format. It will sort through controversies and provide updates on new technologies and developments. In this publication, we have combined the best of various learning experiences—review articles, panel discussions, and continuing medical education—into one vehicle. Experts in the field will be chosen to provide an overview on a specific topic; for example, on controversies in spine surgery or on spinal biomechanics, etc. This overview will then be followed by an interactive panel discussion of experts. This series will contain the opinions of a number of experts, not just a single author or a small group of authors. Each issue will have a guest editor or editors with special expertise on the featured topic. On some topics our experts may agree; on others their opinions will differ. The goal is to provide our readers with an educational experience which is unique, informative, stimulating, and entertaining. The final section of CME assessment is included as an added benefit to our readers who can receive continuing medical education credit in a convenient and effective manner.

Our inaugural volume is on the important topic of *Spine Biomechanics: Evaluation of Motion Preservation Devices and Relevant Terminology*, which is the foundation and one of the driving forces behind much of the exciting research and new clinical developments in the field today. We have assembled some of the world's leading experts to provide an overview of current thinking and to debate ongoing

controversies. It is our hope that this monograph will initiate a much-needed discussion on the issues addressed here and help bring other important issues to the forefront. Our goal is to arrive at a consensus for a standard terminology to describe various disc designs and a standard set of test protocols for interpretation of data; these will be increasingly needed as evaluation protocols for fusion continue to converge. We believe that these standards will prove invaluable to communication between biomechanical engineers and spine surgeons as they strive to advance the art and science of spine surgery.

Vijay K. Goel, PhD

Manohar M. Panjabi, PhD, D Tech