

# Intramedullary tumors: ongoing technical & decision-making challenge With emphasis on children

A surgeon's view

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# The plan for today..

## IMSCT's

- *Overview*
- *Clinical*
- *Imaging*
- *Setup*
- *Surgery*
- *Oncology*
- *Conclusions*

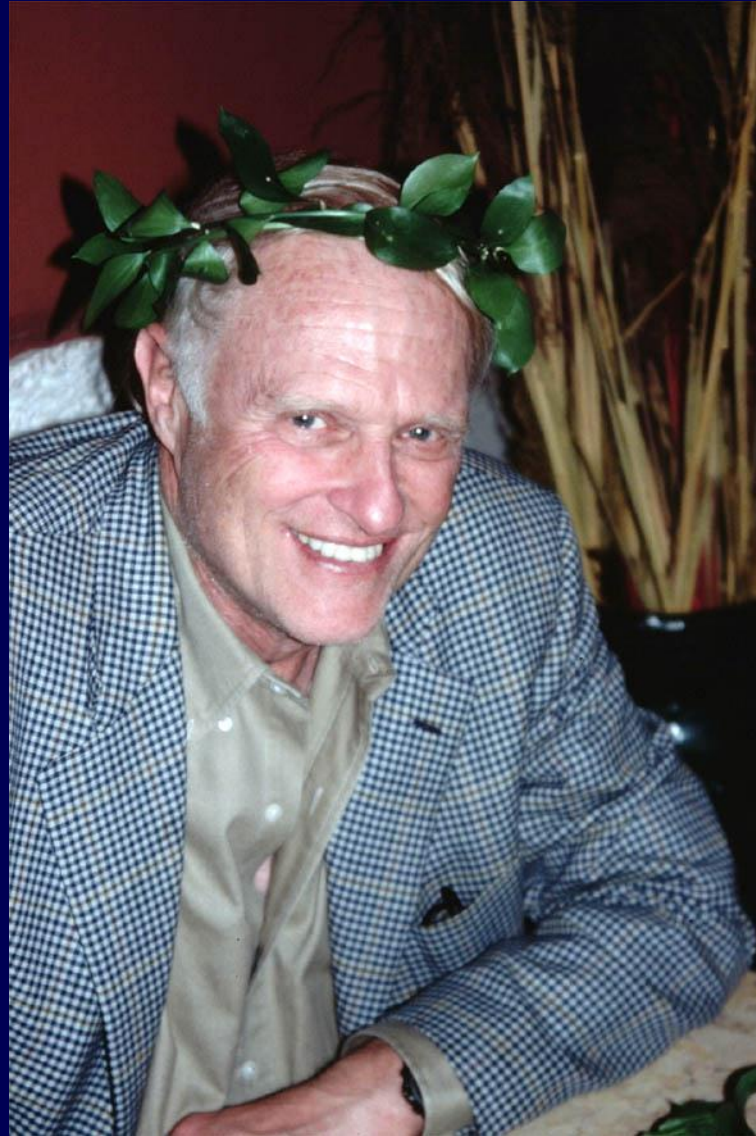


# Intramedullary tumors (& IOM): My bias!

- **Fred Epstein's legacy**
- + my own experience:
- Long Follow-up: available
- Awareness of morbidity
- Gradual change in strategy



# Fred: an “inspiration” giant



# Intramedullary tumors (& IOM): My own bias!

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- + **my own experience:**
- Long Follow-up: available
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- Gradual change in strategy



# Added:

- **Additional 5 years of follow-up**
- **Additional >300 Intra Dural spinal cases**
  - **In Israel**



J Neurosurg 85:1036–1043, 1996

## ***(27 cases)***

Intramedullary spinal cord tumors in children under the age of 3 years

SHLOMO CONSTANTINI, M.D., M.Sc., JOHN HOUTEN, M.D., DOUGLAS C. MILLER, M.D., Ph.D., DIANA FREED, B.A., MEMET M. OZEK, M.D., LUCY B. RORKE, M.D., JEFFREY C. ALLEN, M.D., AND FRED J. EPSTEIN, M.D.

**J Neurosurgery**  
**85:1036–1043, 1996**

J Neurosurg (Spine 2) 93:183–193, 2000

## ***(164 cases)***

Radical excision of intramedullary spinal cord tumors: surgical morbidity and long-term follow-up evaluation in 164 children and young adults

SHLOMI CONSTANTINI, M.D., M.Sc., DOUGLAS C. MILLER, M.D., JEFFREY C. ALLEN, M.D., LUCY B. RORKE, M.D., DIANA FREED, AND FRED J. EPSTEIN, M.D.

**J Neurosurgery**  
**93:183–193, 2000**

***Pediatric papers IMSCT***

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# Intramedullary tumors: My own bias!

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**Hua Tuo, Patron of Surgeons**  
*Spinal cord*  
**or, How to Get Into Another-Head-Without**  
**Losing Your Own!** *Head*

A. SHERER, F.EPSTEIN, M.D., S.CONSTANTINI, M.D.

*Surgical Neurology 2004*

**There is lots of talking to do  
before & after the surgery**



*Always more when you deal with children*

# Intramedullary tumors: My own bias!

- Fred Epstein's legacy
- + my own experience:
- Long Follow-up: available
- Awareness of morbidity
- **Gradual change in strategy**

*Major role to*

*Intra-operative Monitoring IOM*



# IMSCT: History & Overview I

- < 80's
- *“It is not feasible to carry out extensive removal of tumors from within the center of the spinal cord without inflicting injury”*

*Textbook of neurosurgery*



# IMSCT: History & Overview II

- Decompression+RxT (*not that bad for old-age*)
- There is no “alternative treatment” ??
- Major change in the late 70’s...
- Pre-MR data is useless!
- Long-term follow-ups are available
- 2000: Gradual balanced view..
- :+2000
  - *Employ Multi-modality treatment*
  - *Implement modern techniques*
  - *Tailor treatment individually*



- *Pediatric IST are rare*
- *P-IMSCT's are rarer*
- *About 2-3/100,000 children per year*
- *More adult IMSCT than children 1:8*

*Better if same surgeon does both kids & adults!*

*Ependymoma/Astro ratio goes up with age*

### **Intraspinal tumors in 872 children**

<u>Tumor Type and Location</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>%</u>
<b><u>Intramedullary</u></b>	<b>315</b>	<b>36.1</b>
Astrocytoma	201	23.1
Ganglioglioma	35	4.0
Ependymoma	3	0.3
Other	76	8.7
<b><u>Intradural Extramedullary</u></b>	<b>235</b>	<b>26.9</b>
Schwannoma	32	3.7
Meningioma	21	2.4
Ependymoma	58	6.7
Dermoid/ Epidermoid	55	6.3
Teratoma	37	4.2
Lipoma	32	3.7
<b><u>Extradural</u></b>	<b>212</b>	<b>24.3</b>
Neuroblastoma	69	7.9
Sarcoma	62	7.1
Lymphoma	5	0.6
Aneurismal Bone Cyst	7	0.8
Metastatic	33	3.8
PNET	36	4.1
<b><u>nonclassified</u></b>	<b>110</b>	<b>12.6</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>872</b>	<b>100</b>

*From: Constantini & Epstein, Schmidek  
1995*

# P-IMSCT's: Reasons for Investigation

- Motor regression 65%
- Pain 45%
- Gait abnormalities 37%
- Dysesthesia 32%
- Progressive kypho-scoliosis 32%



# P-IMSCT's: Clinical Presentation I

- **Pain:** the most common symptom

At night! True for children & adults!

Night pain=MR+BS

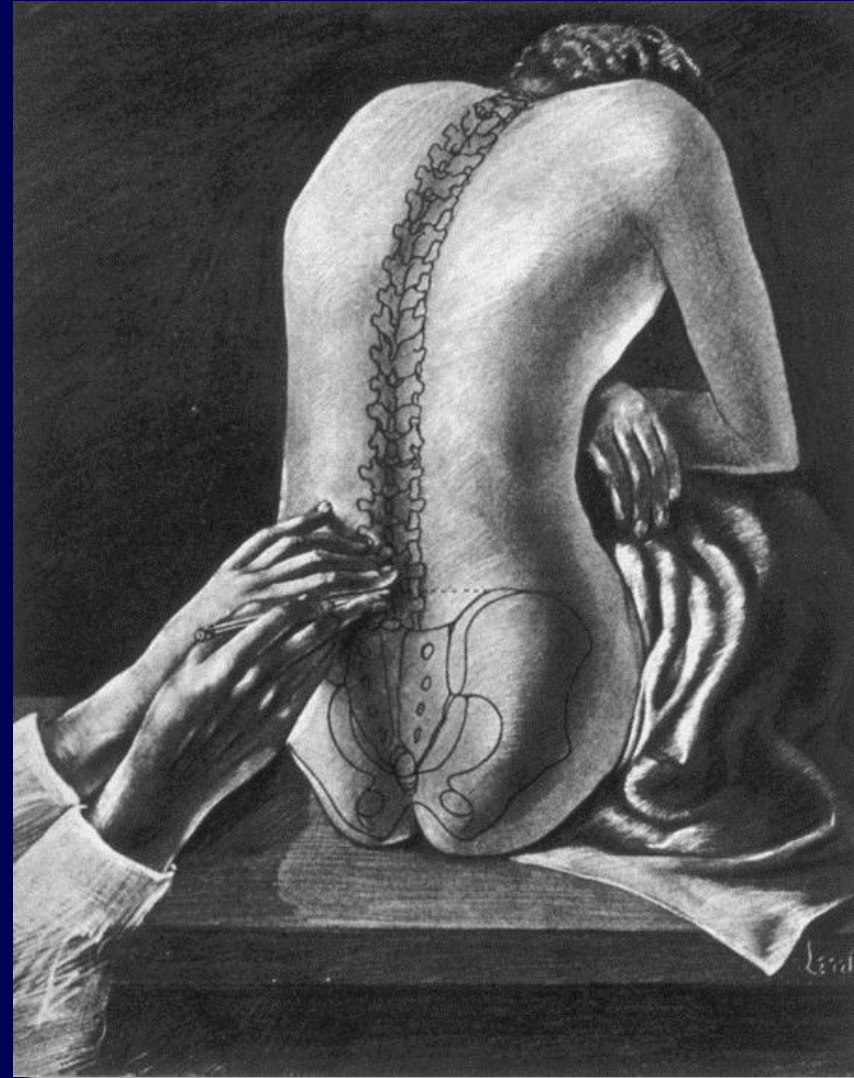
Corresponds to the bony level

Abdominal pain: Non-specific!

**For adult ependymomas: Sensory complains**

# P-IMSCT's: Clinical Presentation II

- Pain
- **Scoliosis**
- Urinary dysfunction
  - Rare & late
  - In cauda / conus lesion
- **Torticollis**
- Hydrocephalus
- Malignant tumors



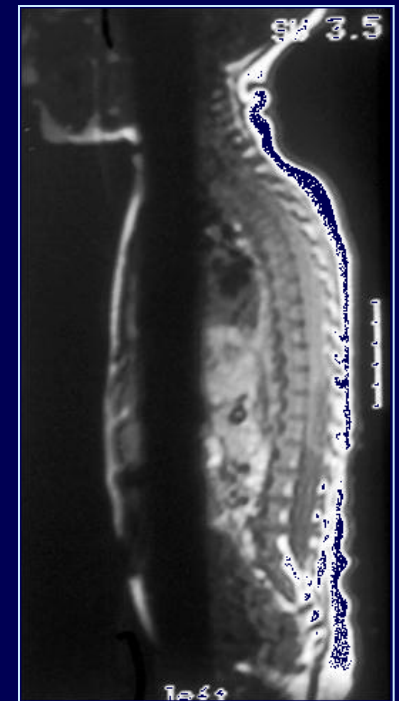
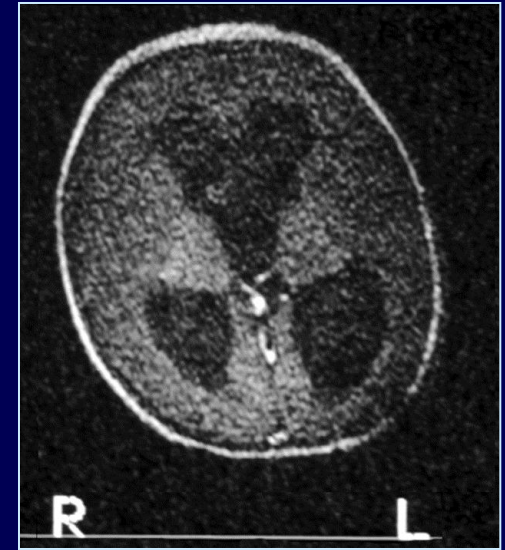
# When to MR patients with scoliosis

- Documented Rapid Progression
- Atypical curve
- Age: early onset < 8y
- Any neurological/urological sign
- Vertebral and midline anomalies
- Pain (especially at night) (Bone scan)
- As screening in dysraphic children

# P-IMSCT's: Clinical Presentation II

- Pain
- Scoliosis
- Urinary dysfunction
  - Rare & late
  - In cauda / conus lesion
- Torticollis
- **Hydrocephalus**
- Malignant tumors: fast!

*2y old came  
for a shunt*



*No reason HCP + high protein CSF----  
Investigate the cord!*

# P-IMSCT's: Clinical Presentation III

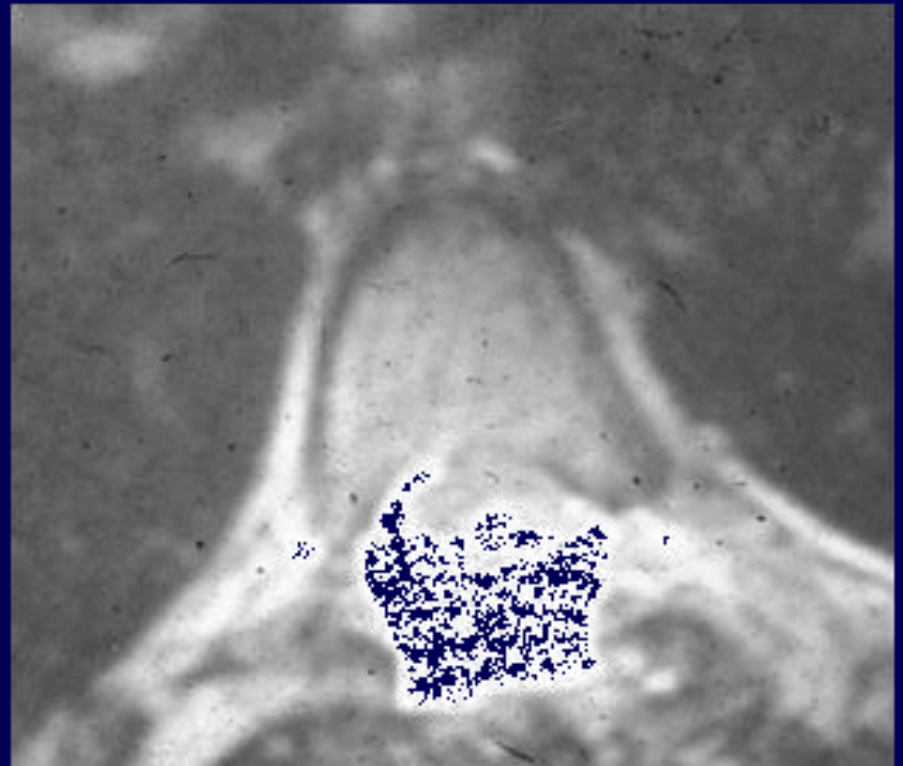
- **Motor (may be subtle!)**
  - Alternation of normal gait
  - Regression
  - Late walker
  - Switching handedness
  - Muscle atrophy  
(low cervical)



# P-IMSCT's: Radiology I: X Ray+CT

## Probably, totally useless

- Diffuse widening
- Erosion of pedicles
- Scalloping



# IMSCT's: Radiology II: MR imaging

- Always with Gd
  - May or may not enhance (75%)
- T1: solid & cystic components
- T2: myelographic effect
- Always get the entire spine!
- Consider getting a brain MR for baseline

*10 y old 1998*

*Drooling & neck pain*

*C3-6 astrocytoma*





*15 years old*

*Came after she had a biopsy,  
dural decompression & RxT*

*Enjoyed..*

*Symptoms back 3 years later*

*Astrocytoma*



*2 years old girl*

*Continence-regression*

*Conus ganglioglioma*

*Solid tumor!*

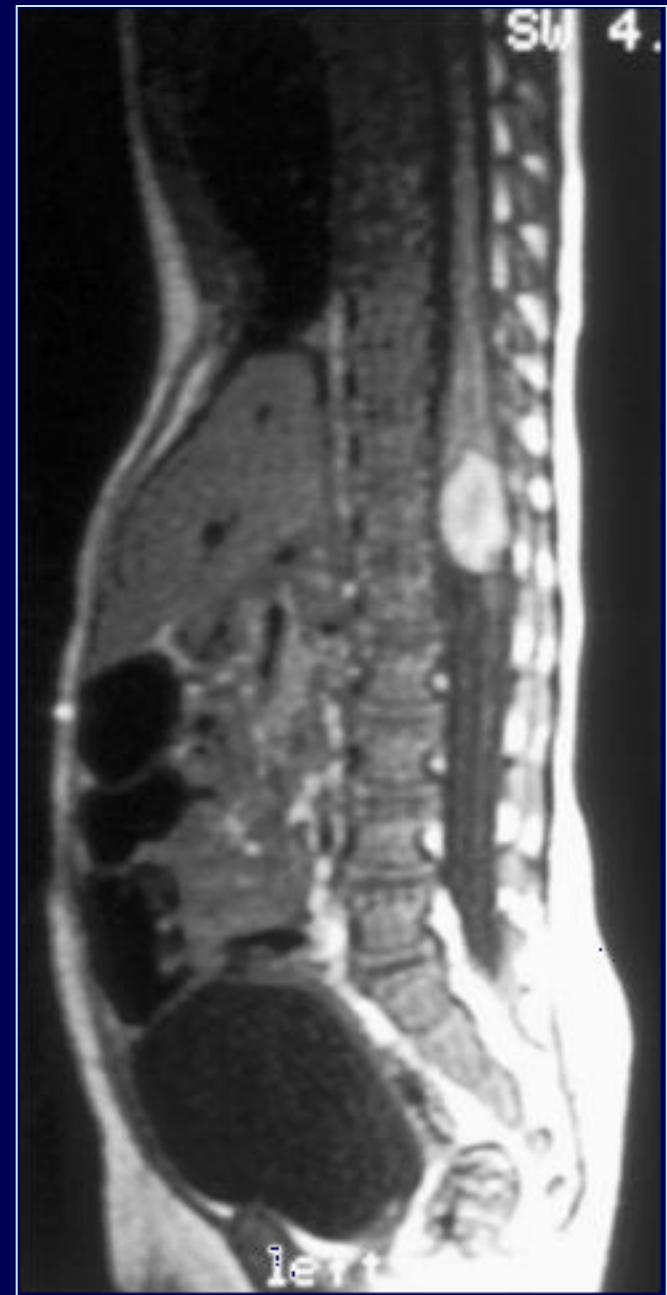


4 years old with incontinence

Conus/Cauda ependymoma

Note the large bladder

*These are not “true” IMSCT’s*

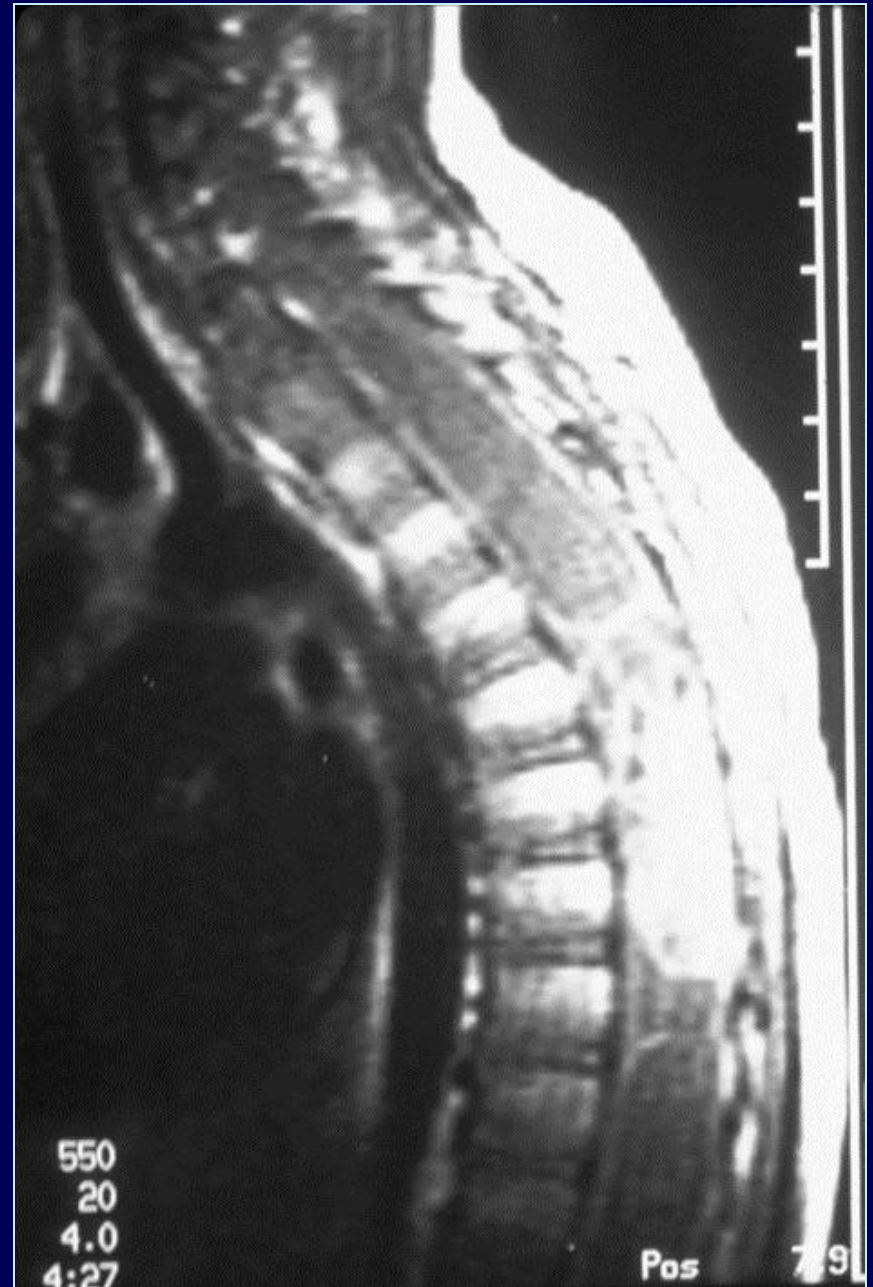


14 years old

Mother insisted to get  
imaging because of  
pain

CT: “Normal”

Ganglioglioma



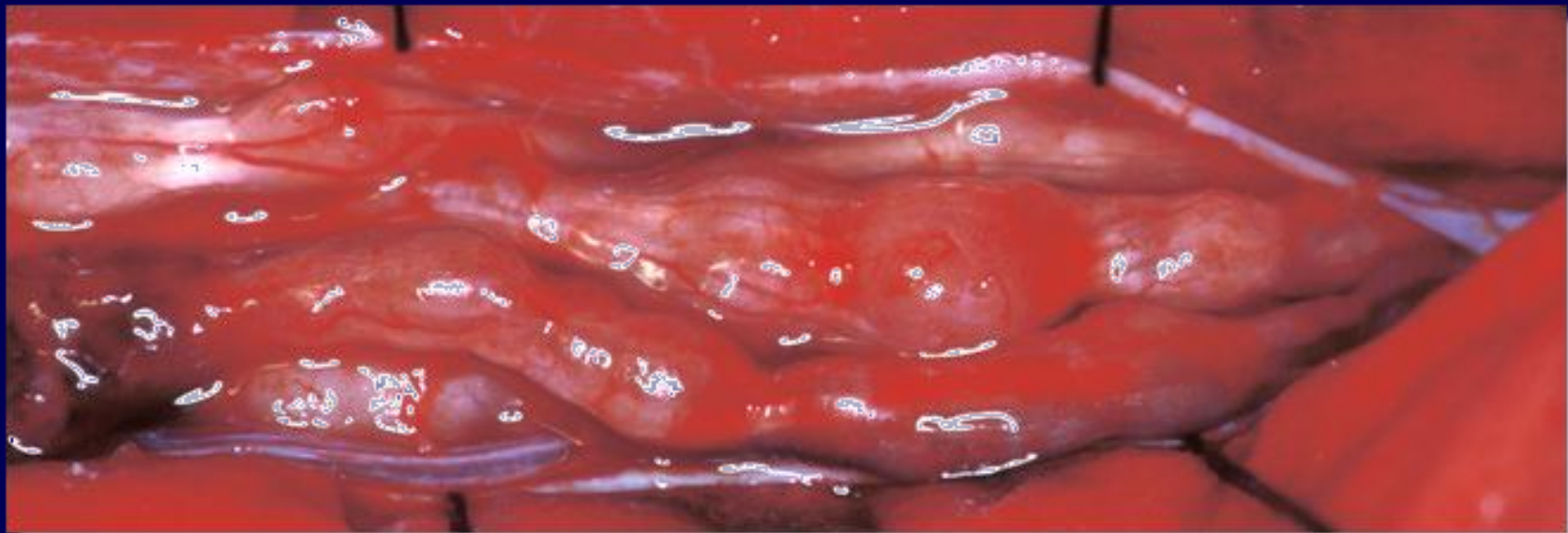
*12 years old with pain*

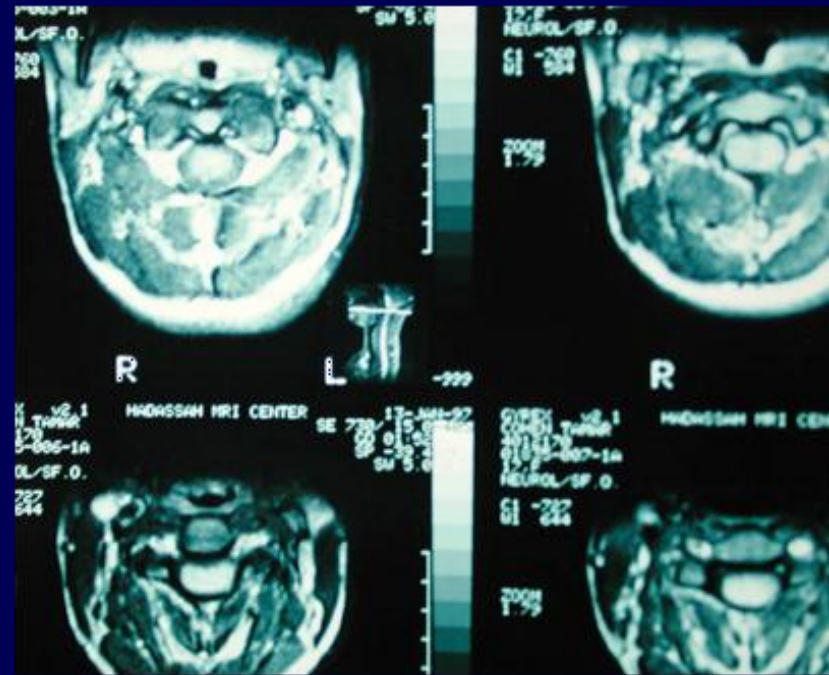
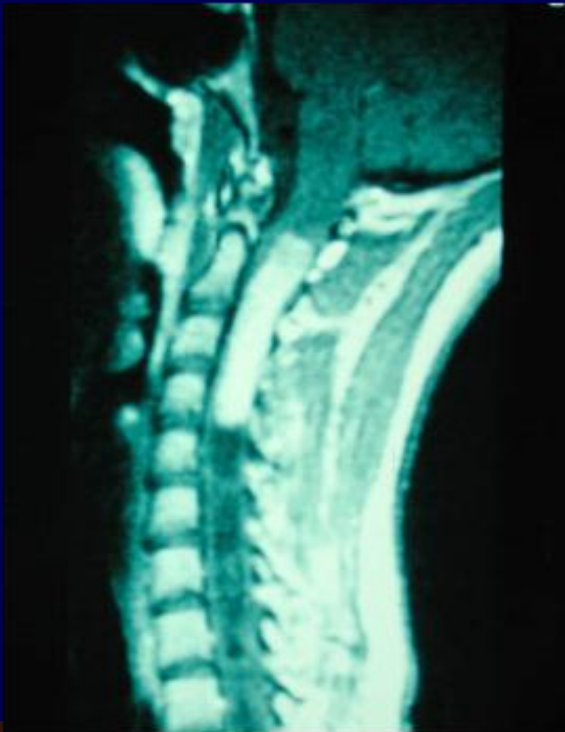
*“primary” spinal PNET*

*No brain lesion*

*Not a true IMSCT*

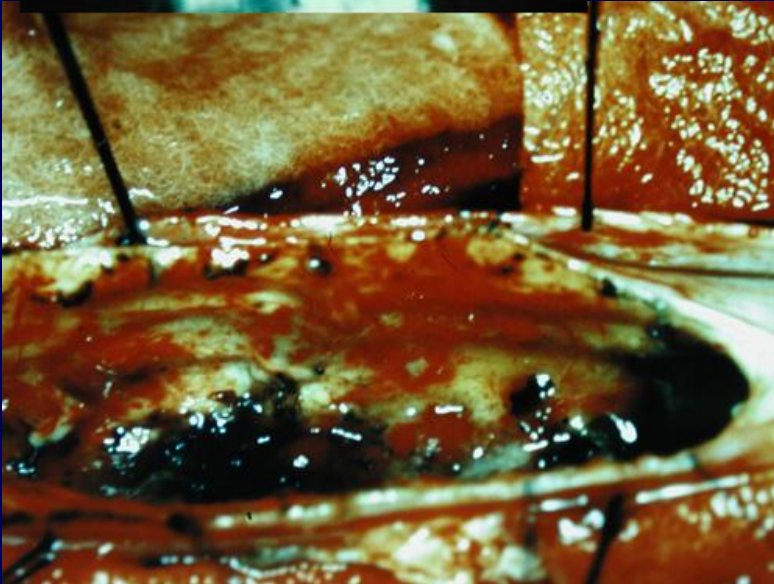
**Subarachnoid tumors**





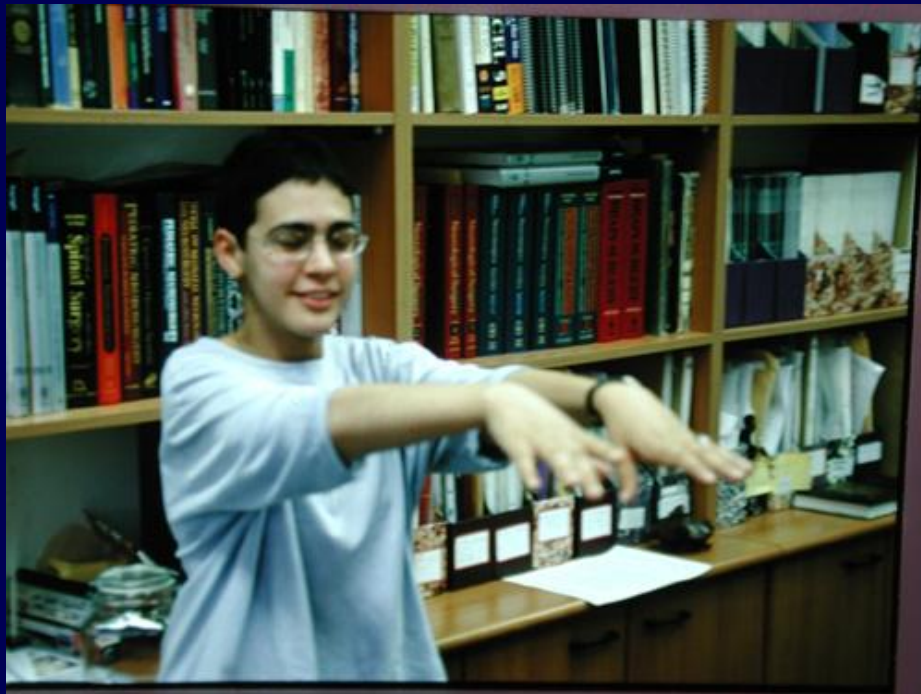
*16 y with 9y clumsiness  
Almost paralyzed deltoids  
Astrocytoma*

*A long symptomatology does not exclude a neoplasm!*



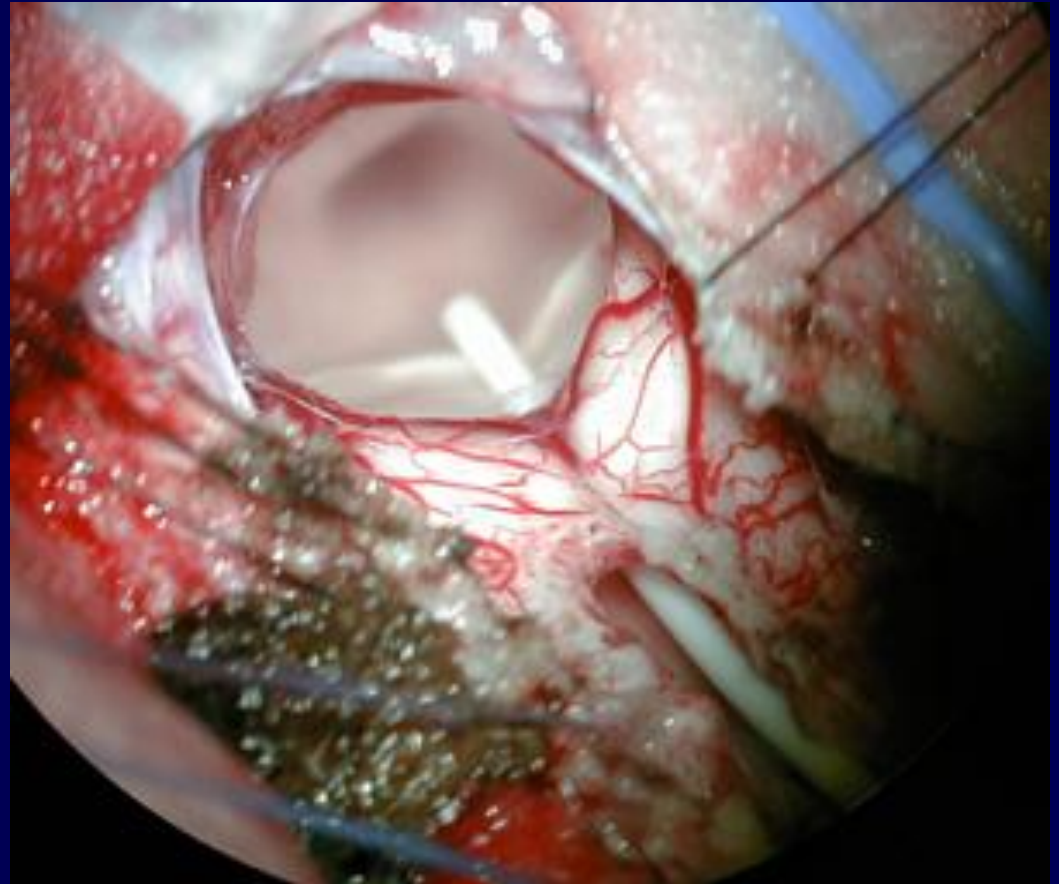
# Intramedullary astrocytoma

## Post operatively



# 3y old Presented with drooling & torticollis

## Astrocytoma: Cervico-medullary



*Note dorsal direction after hitting pyramid decussation*

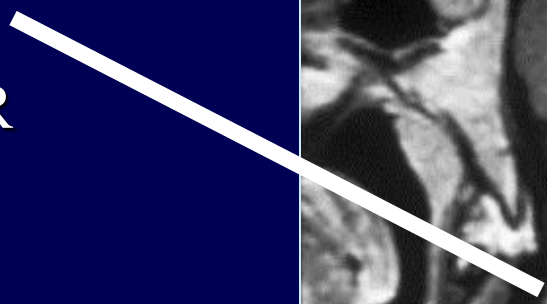


2 years after surgery:

Local recurrence..

V+C chemotherapy---CR

No evidence of disease 3  
years later



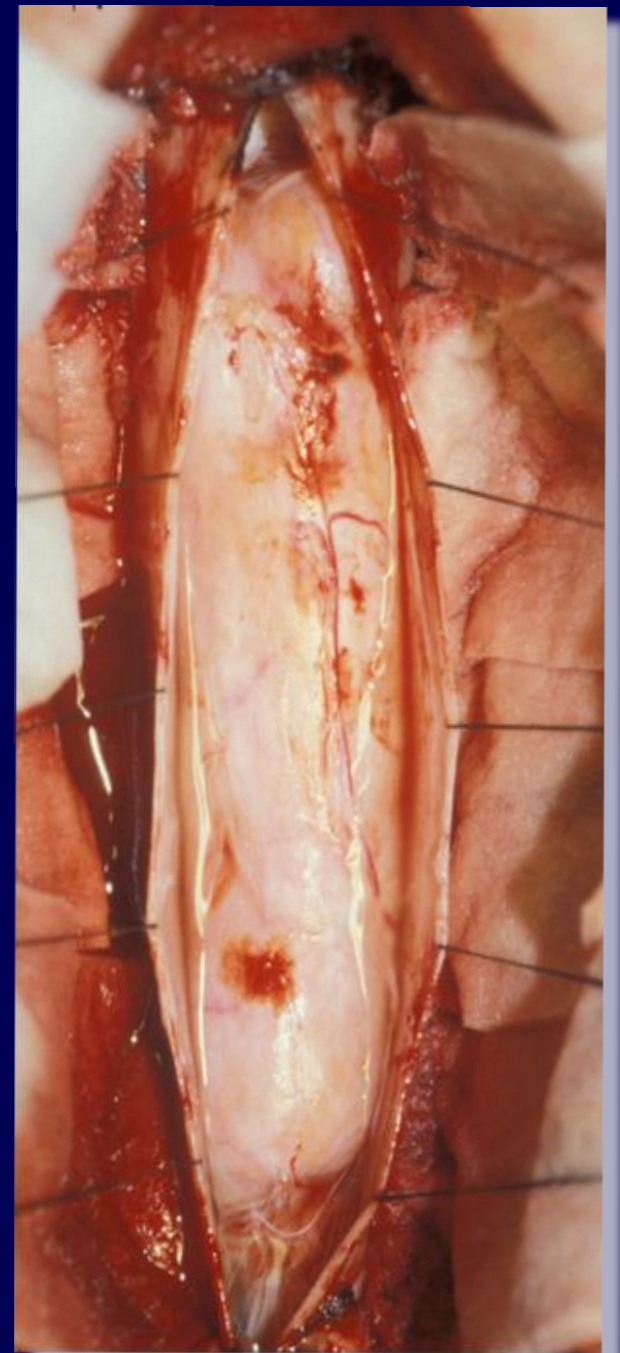
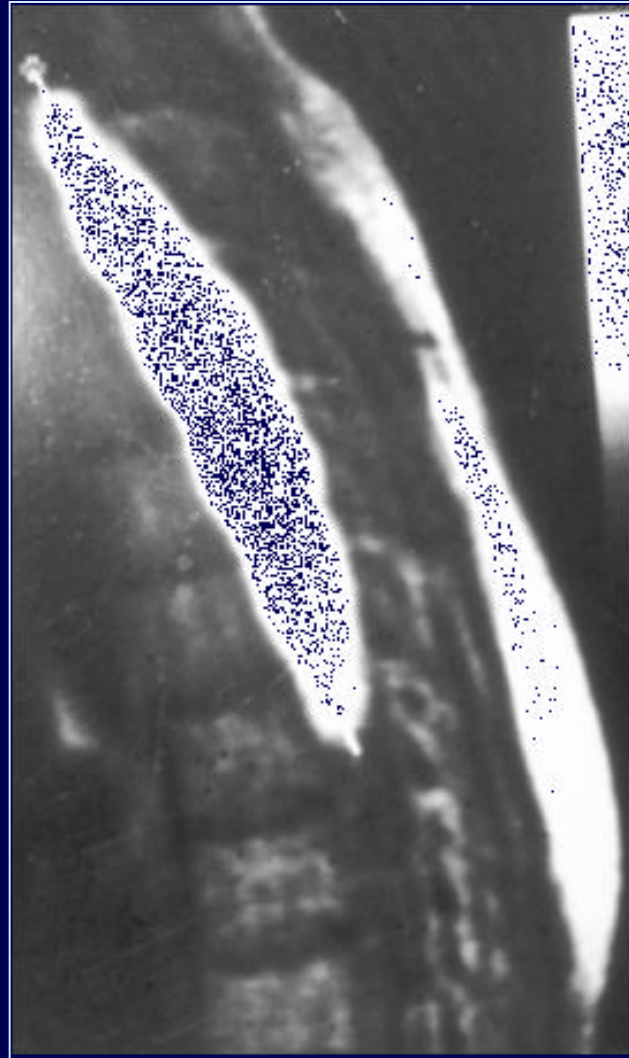
3 years later

*Intramedullary lipomatosis:*

*A different entity*

**Cautious with  
indication**

**Cautious with  
resection**



# Scoliosis in IMSCCT's is a major problem

ling editorial in this issue, pp 460–462.

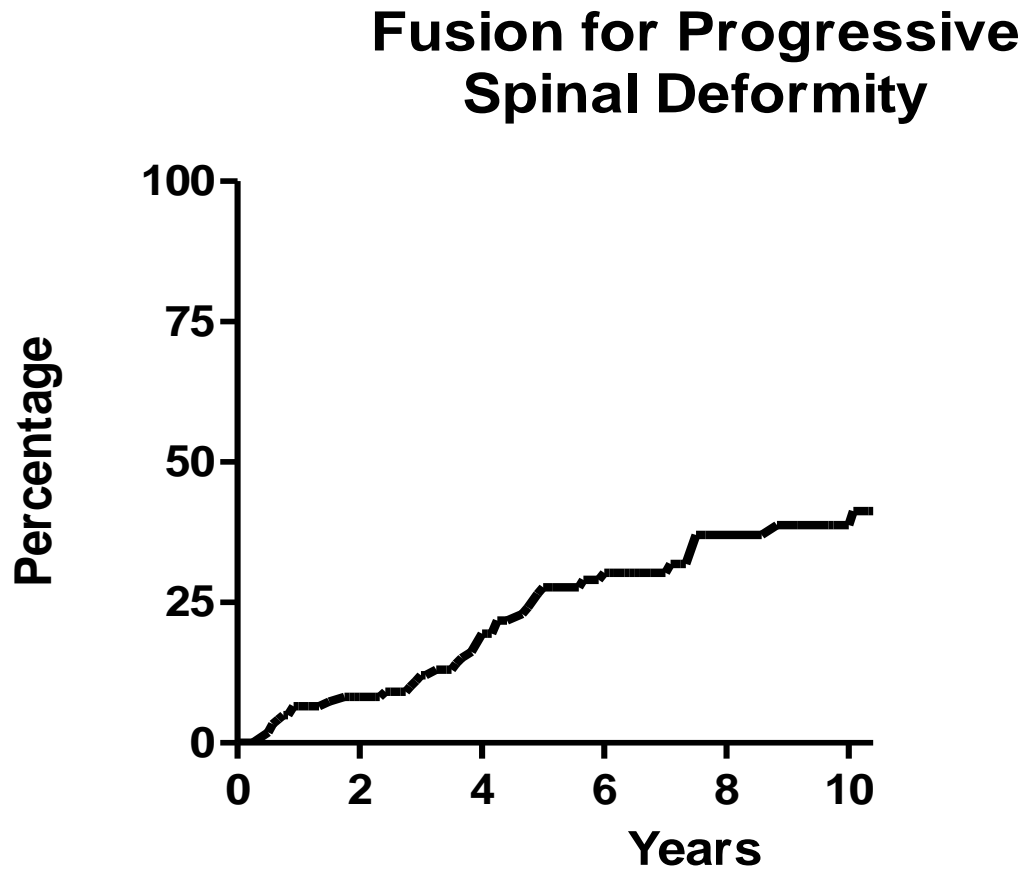
*J Neurosurg (6 Suppl Pediatrics) 107:463–468, 2007*

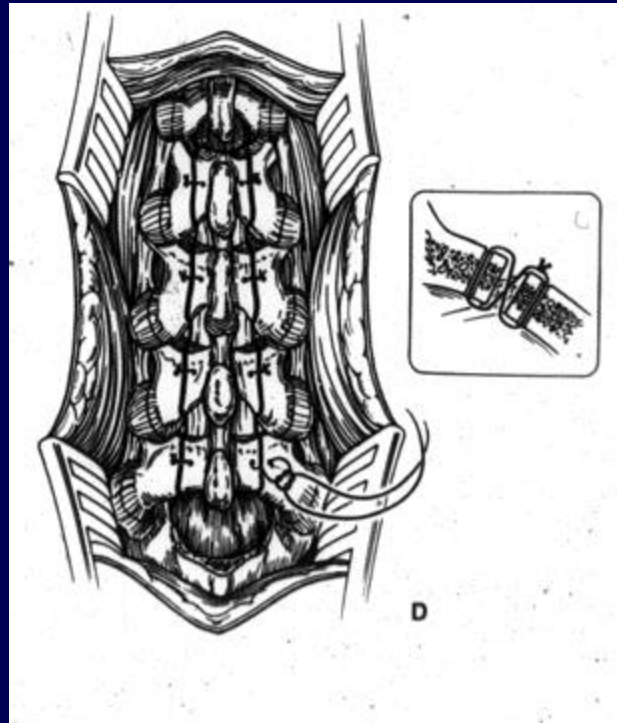
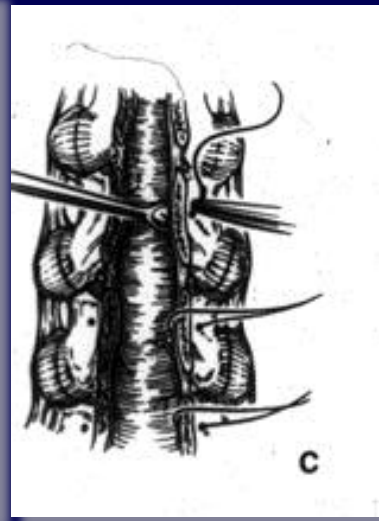
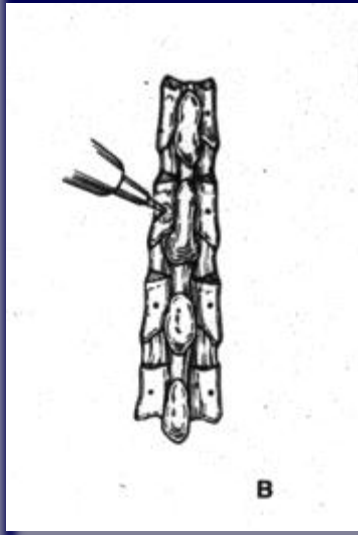
## Risk factors for progressive spinal deformity following resection of intramedullary spinal cord tumors in children: an analysis of 161 consecutive cases

KEVIN C. YAO, M.D.,<sup>1</sup> MATTHEW J. MCGIRT, M.D.,<sup>2</sup> KAISORN L. CHAICHANA, B.S.,<sup>2</sup>  
SHLOMI CONSTANTINI, M.D.,<sup>3</sup> AND GEORGE I. JALLO, M.D.<sup>2</sup>

# Estimated Incidence of Fusion for Progressive Deformity

Median follow-up: 9 years





*Laminotomy Vs  
Laminectomy:*

*Is it worth the  
time?*

## **Conclusions**

- **Progressive spinal deformity requiring fusion occurred in 27% of children undergoing resection of IMSCT and was associated with decreased functional status**
- **Preoperative scoliosis, increasing number of surgical resections, age < 13 years, tumor-associated syrinx, and surgery spanning the thoraco-lumbar junction independently increased risk for progressive spinal deformity**
- **Patients possessing one or more of these characteristics should be monitored closely for progressive spinal deformity following surgery**

# *Ultrasonic aspirator*



**CUSA**

# Lasers.....not important

CO2



**YAG-  
Neomodium**





# CO2 laser: Midline myelotomy & “charcoaling” the residual

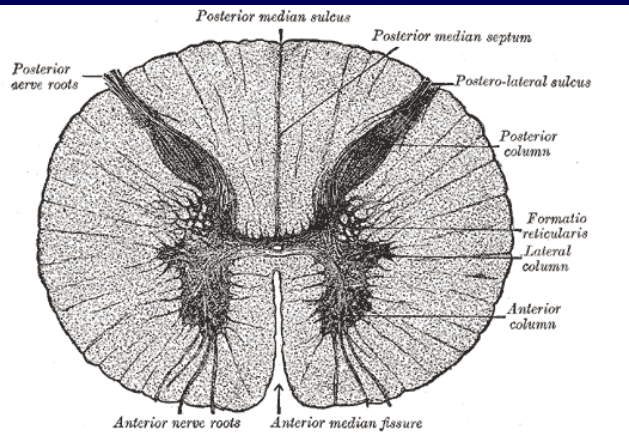


*Lately some revival with “touch” fibers*

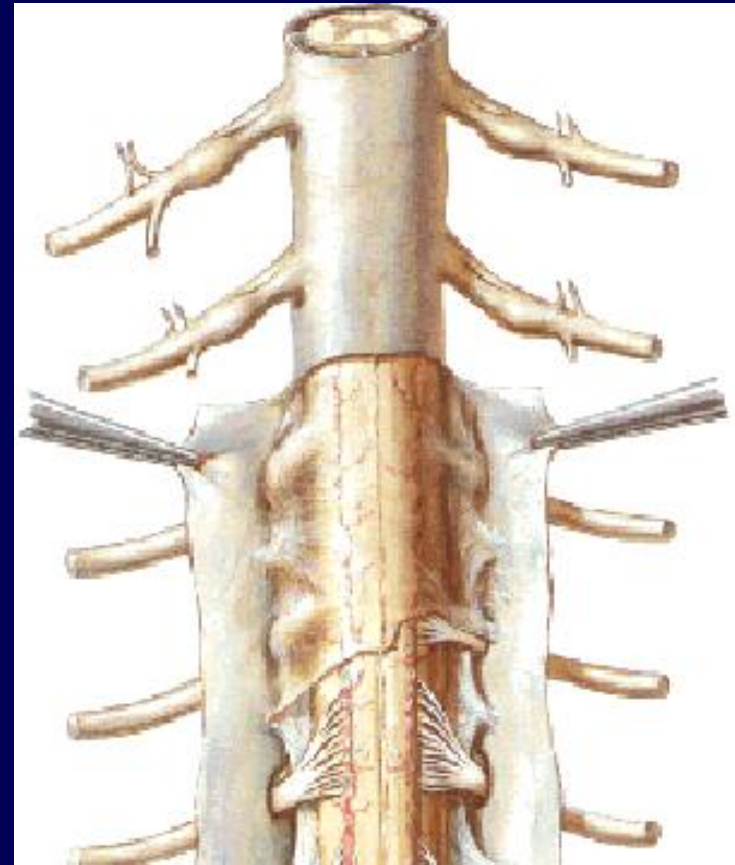
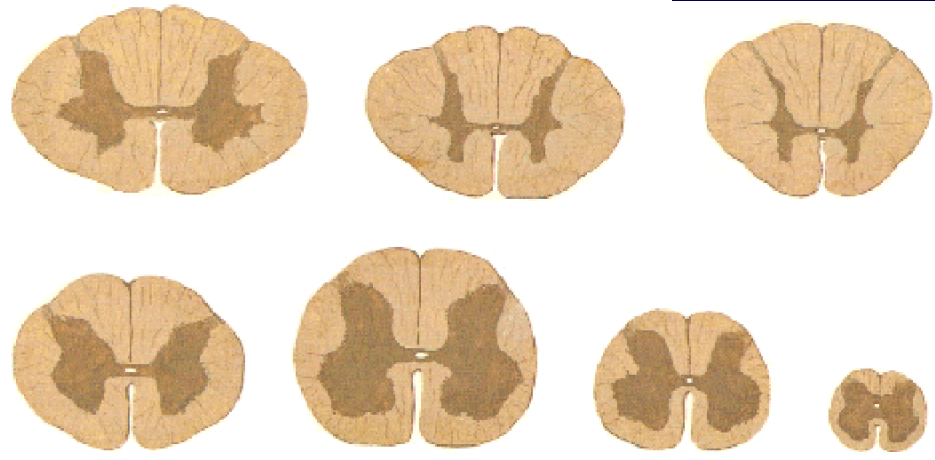
# Spinal Cord anatomy

## Where to enter?

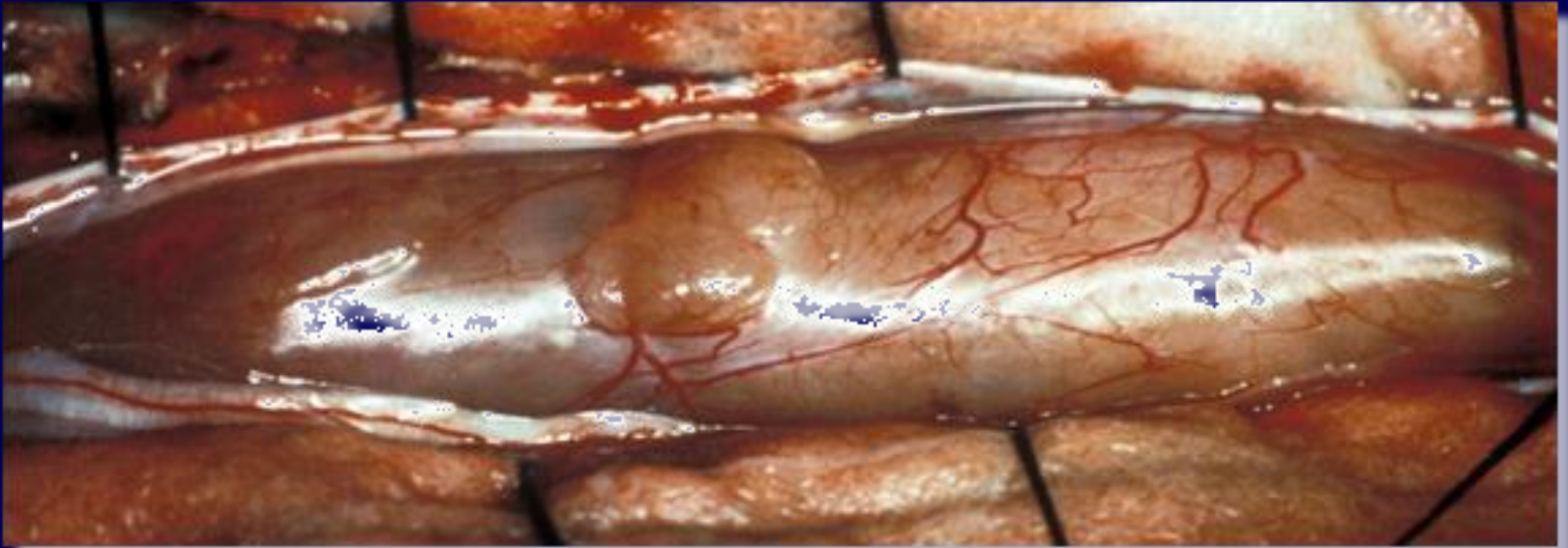
## *Gray Vs. White matter*

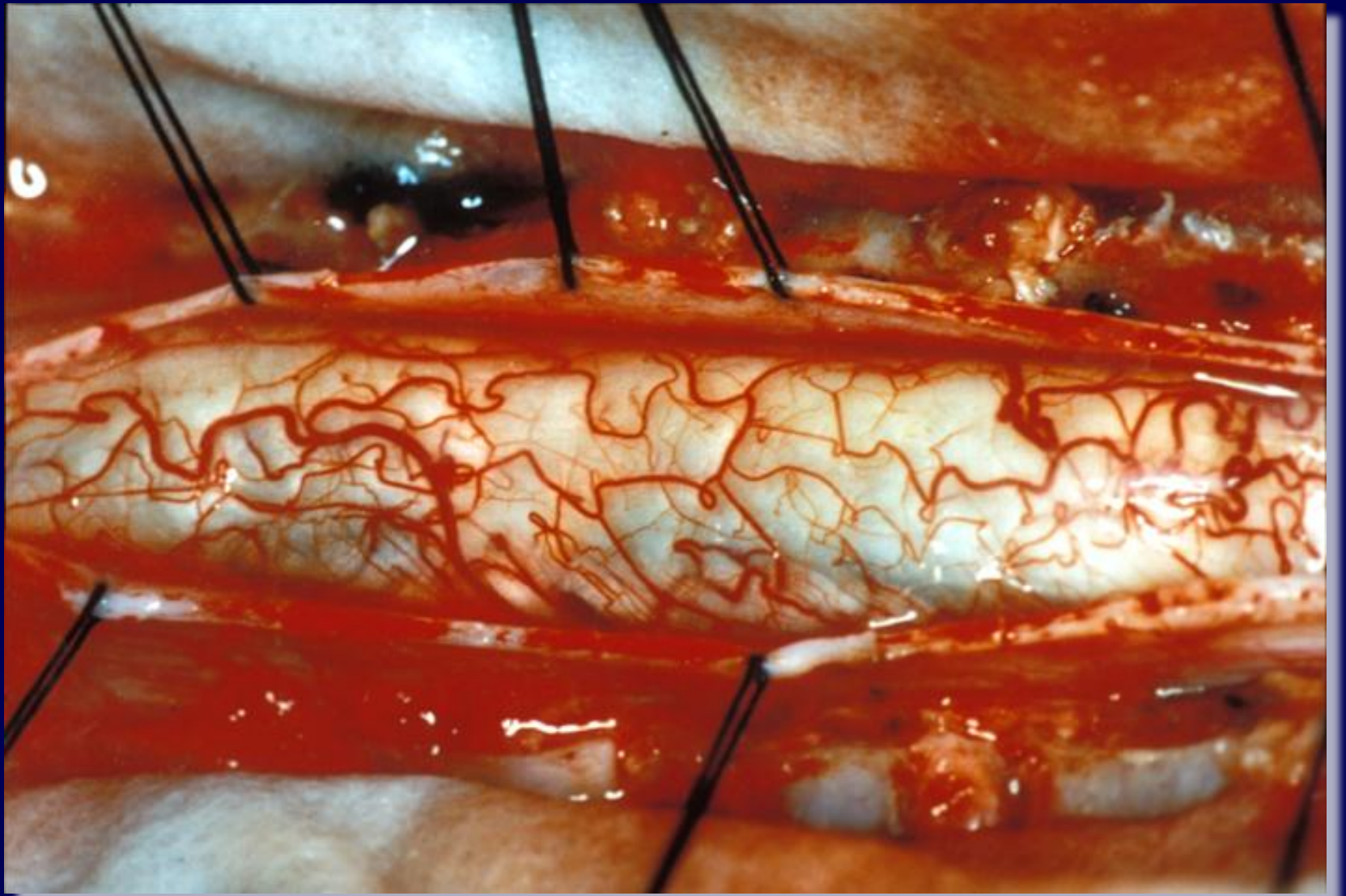


Transverse section of the medulla spinalis in the mid-thoracic region.



## **Astrocytoma: makes the way out...**

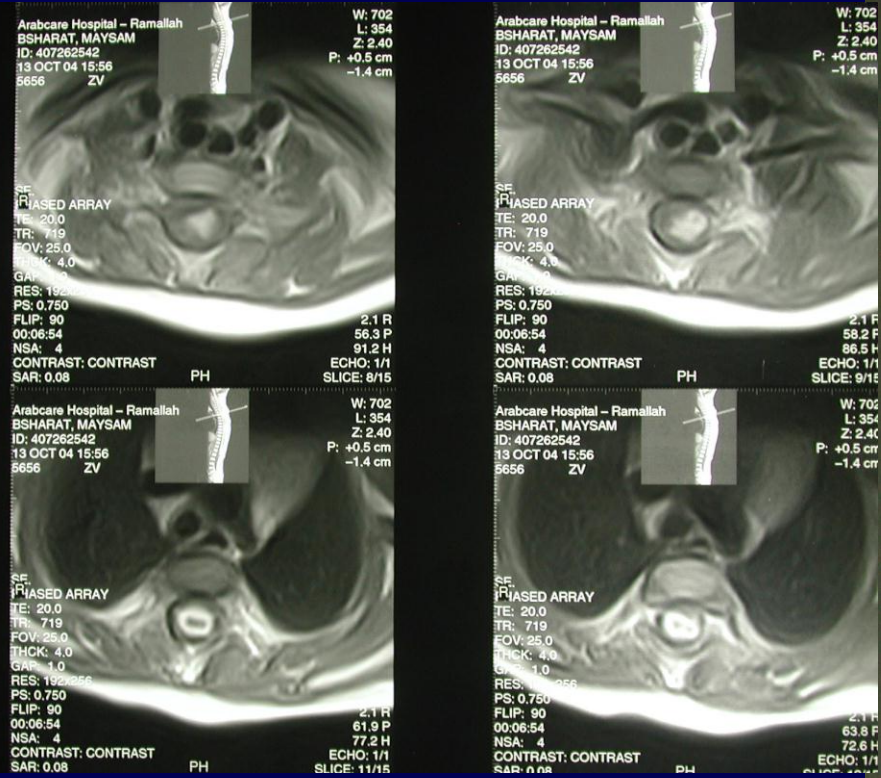




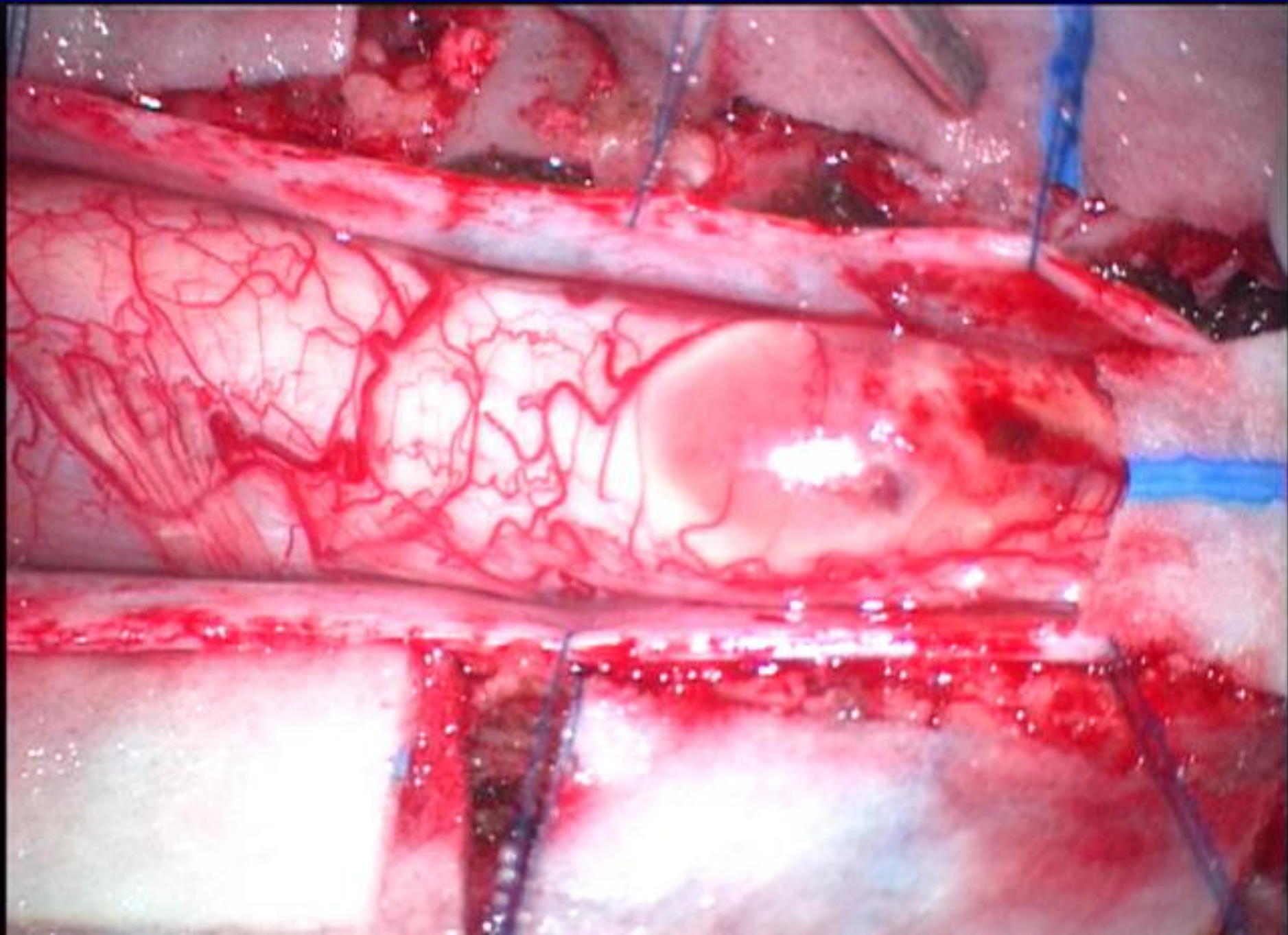
DREZ protrusion

1.5 years old:

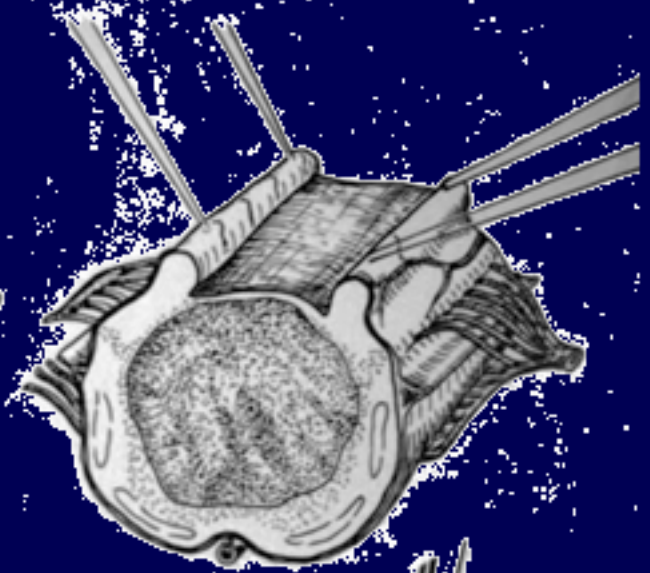
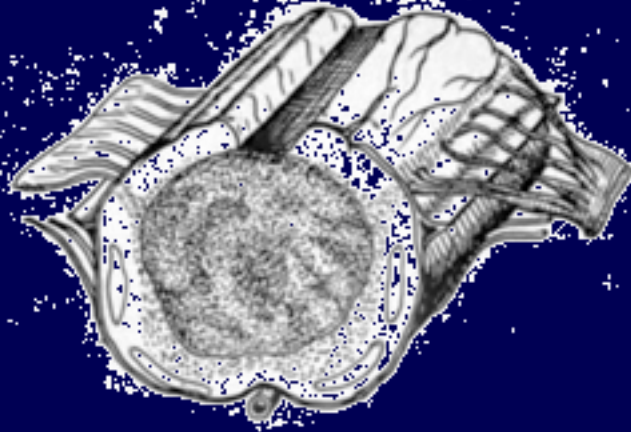
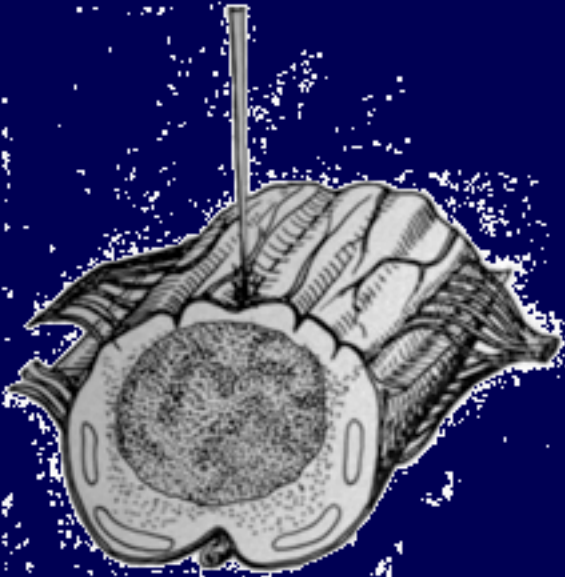
Right hand plegia over 3 weeks



Show film of DREZ entry to IMSCT



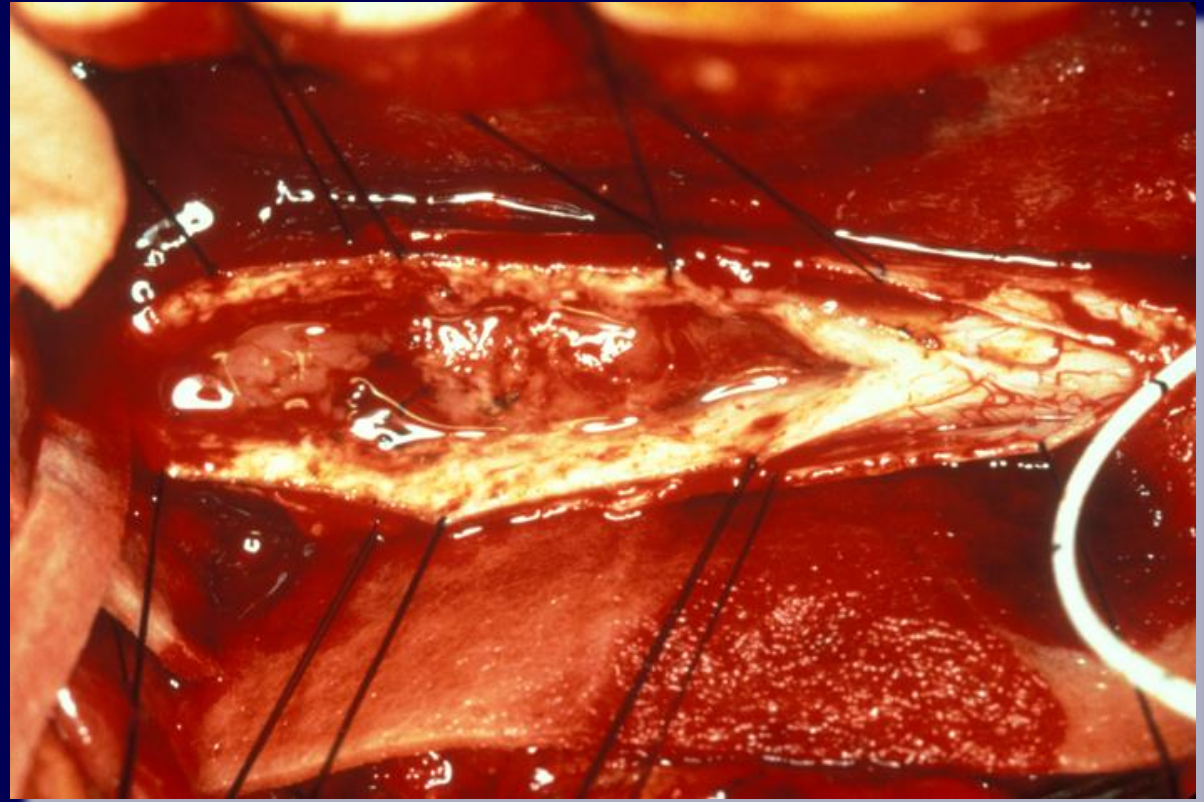
Midline entry



Don't do that!



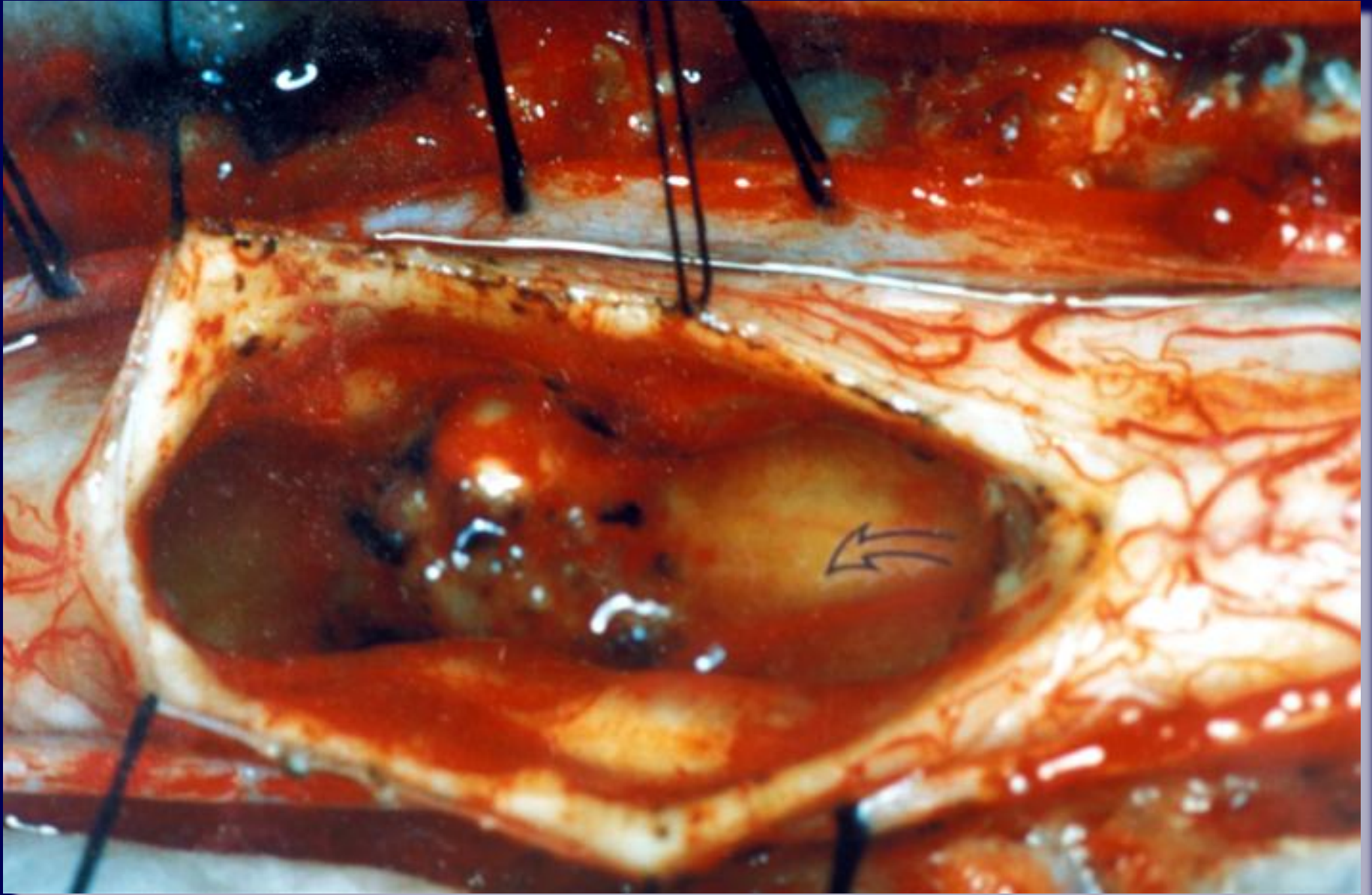
# Midline entry



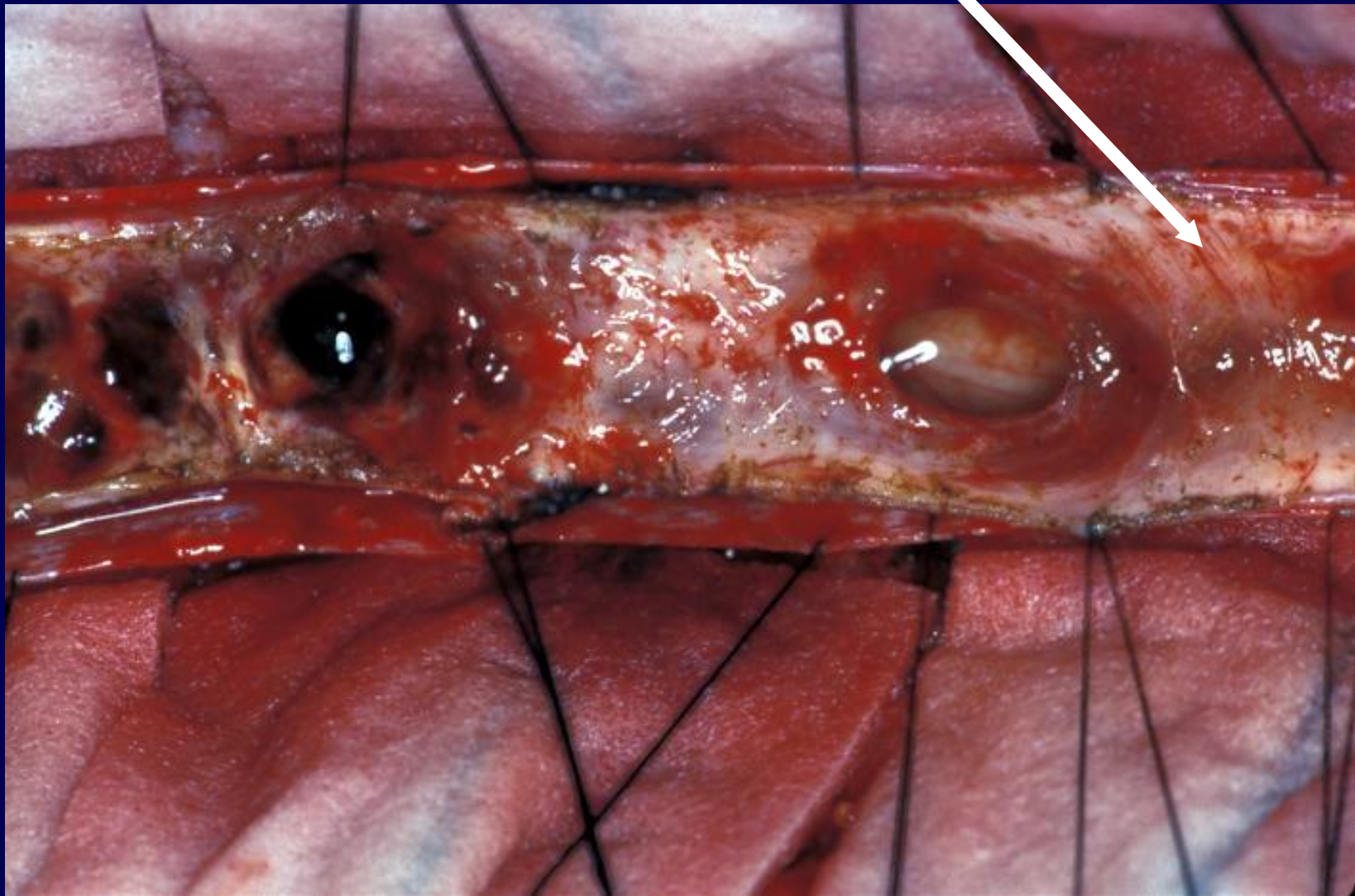
*Risk proportional to the thickness of the DC's*



# Locating the cyst



*Note diagonal vessels*

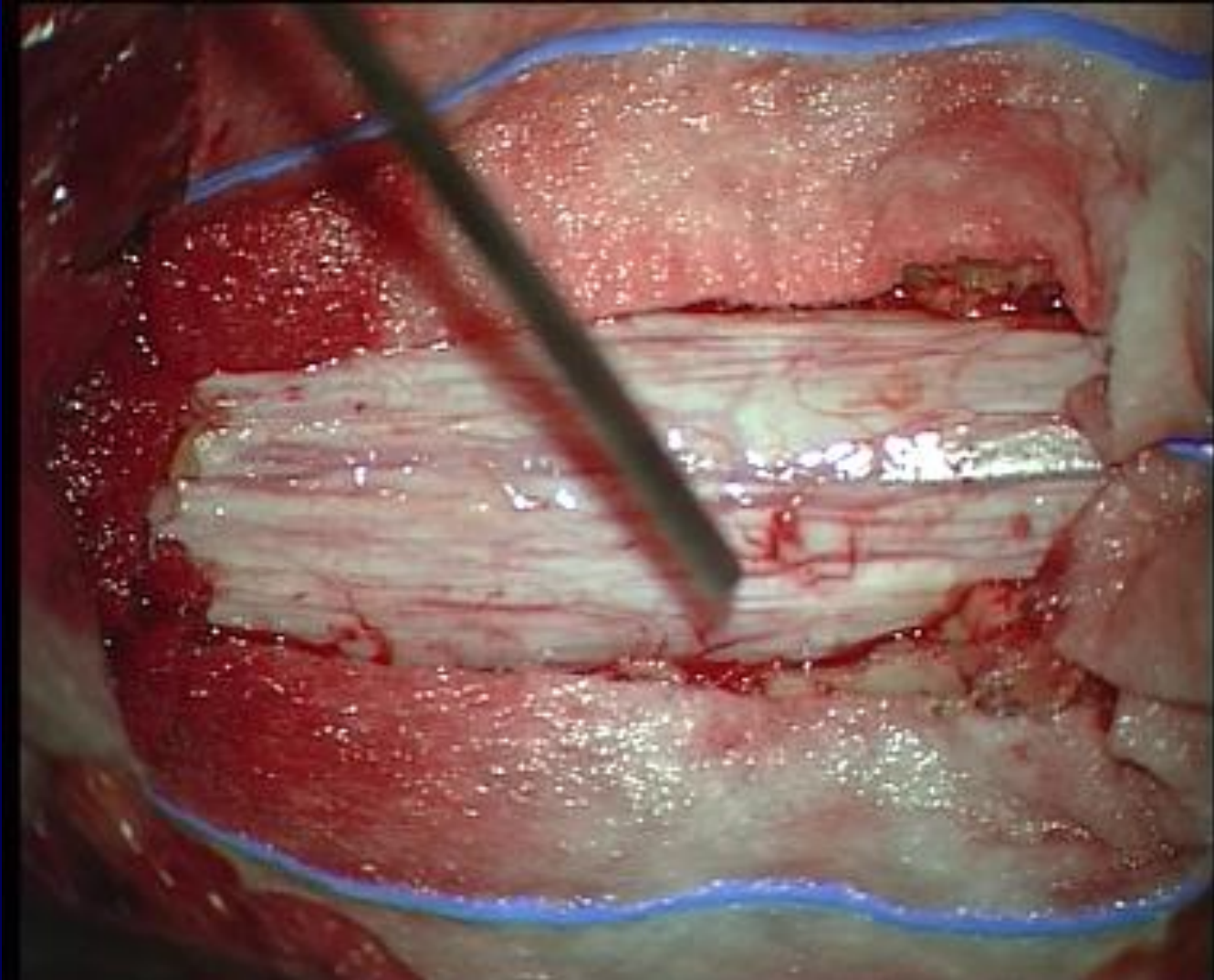




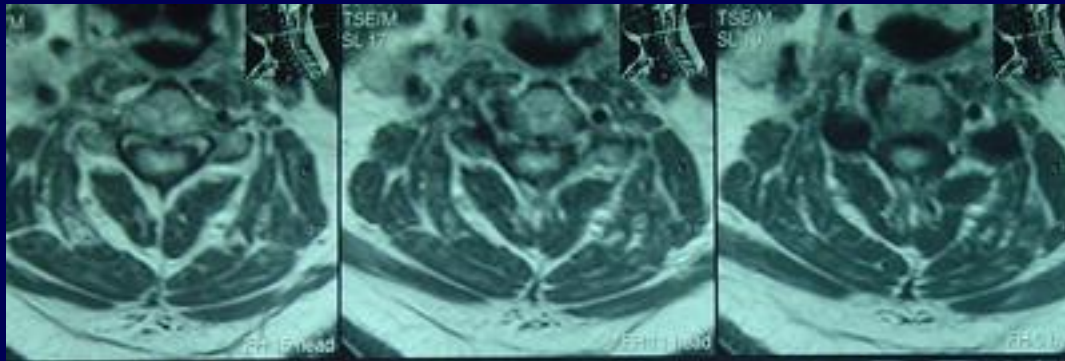


**Midline entry: astrocytoma**

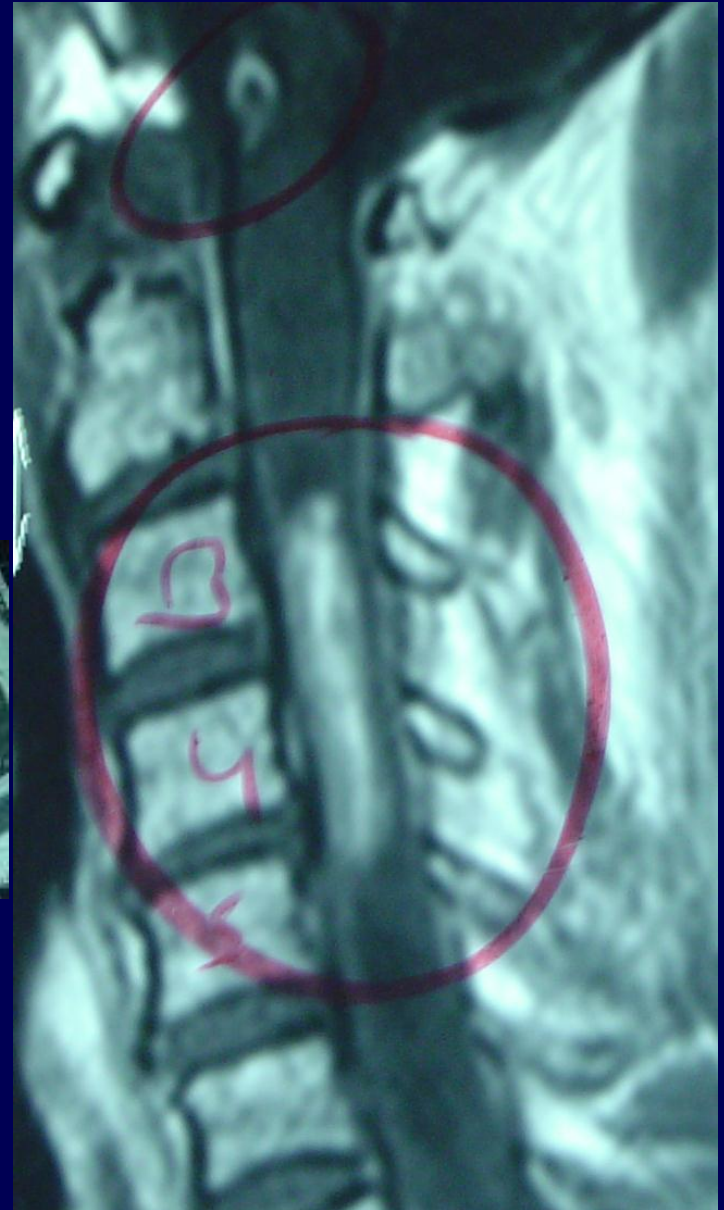
# Midline entry: astrocytoma



# 50 y male Progressive Spastic paraparesis



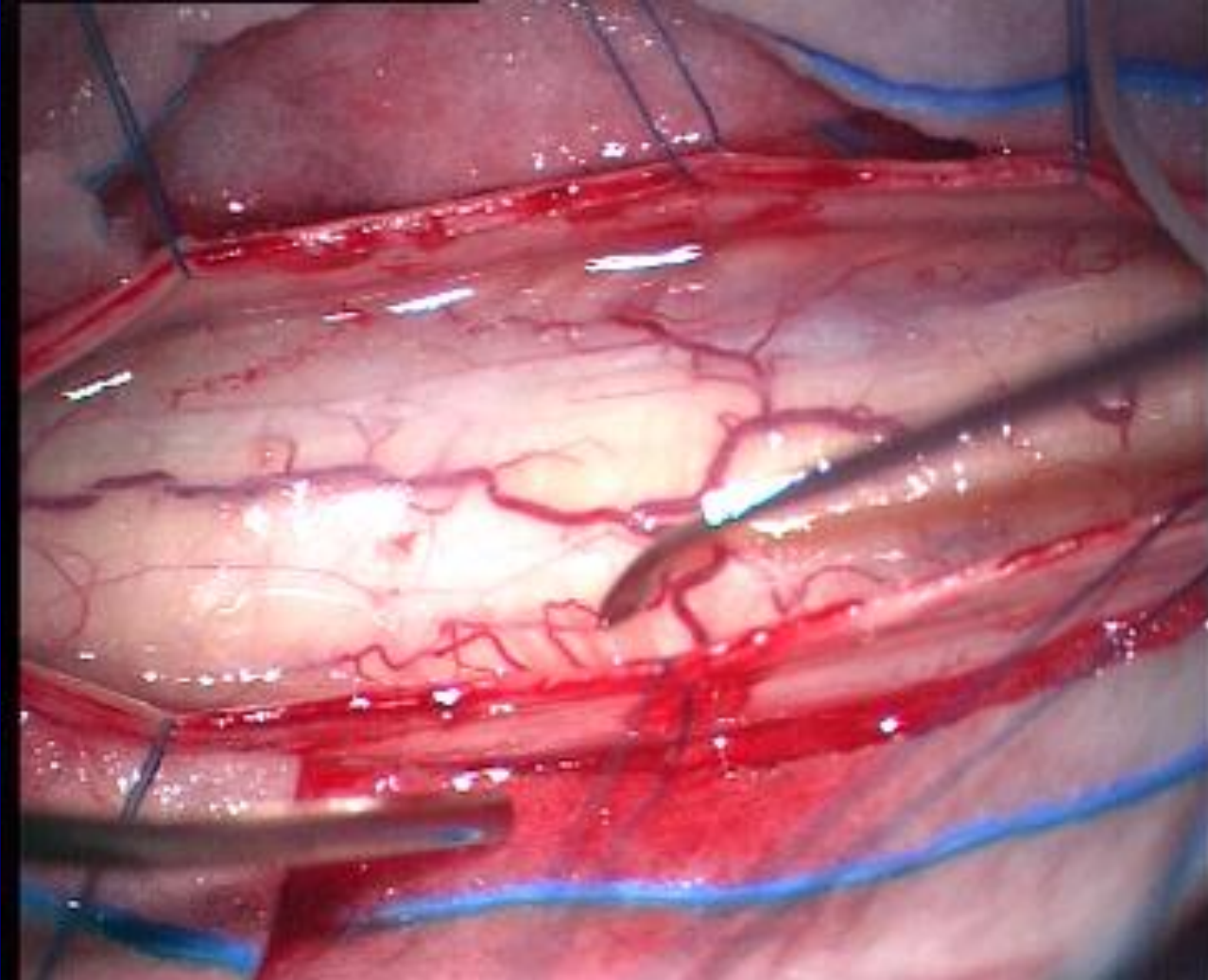
*Show midline myelotomy*



**Midline: adult ependymoma**



# Midline entry for Adult ependymoma



# Position-sense loss Following IMSCCT surgery

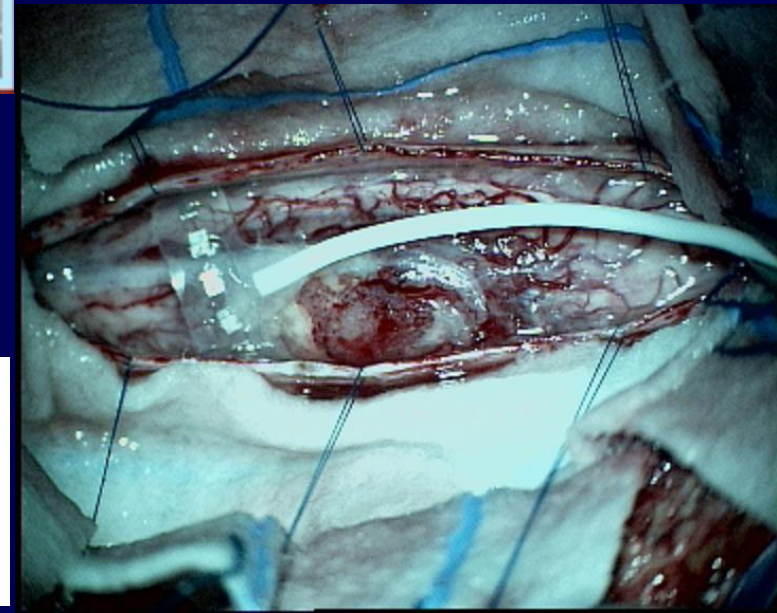
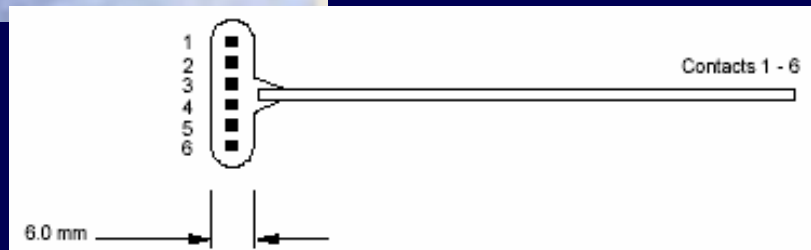


Mr. A

C1-5 ependymoma:

GTR

Walker and runner



# When to stop ?

- Normal white matter appears
- When you get to the anterior vessels
- Be cautious at the “poles”
- In conus 50%
- When MEP’s drop!



*“You can teach a monkey  
how to operate*

*You cannot teach a monkey  
when not to operate”*

*Sir John Garfield*



*“You can teach a monkey  
how to begin an operation*

*You cannot teach a monkey  
when to stop”*

*Modified from:  
Sir John Garfield*



**Radical excision of intramedullary spinal cord tumors:  
surgical morbidity & long-term follow-up  
evaluation in 164 children and young adults**

*CONSTANTINI, MILLER, ALLEN, RORKE, FREED, EPSTEIN*

**J Neurosurgery 93:183–193, 2000**

164 Pt            Age: 6m-21y

Operated 14 years

64% had previous surgery (30% previous RxT)

Policy: after GTR no further treatment

# Location of tumor site

(164 patients) with IMSCT's

<u>Spinal Level</u>	<u>No. of Patients</u>	<u>Percent</u>
cervicomedullary	14	8.5
cervical	26	15.6
cervicothoracic	44	26.8
thoracic	64	39.0
conus	16	9.8

tumor span\*                      2–10 bone levels, **average 5.4**

•Tumor span was calculated for the solid part of the tumor, excluding caudal or rostral cysts.

•*Only 2 patients with LGG: metastatic disease on presentation*

# EXTENT OF RESECTION (164 children) WITH IMSCT'S

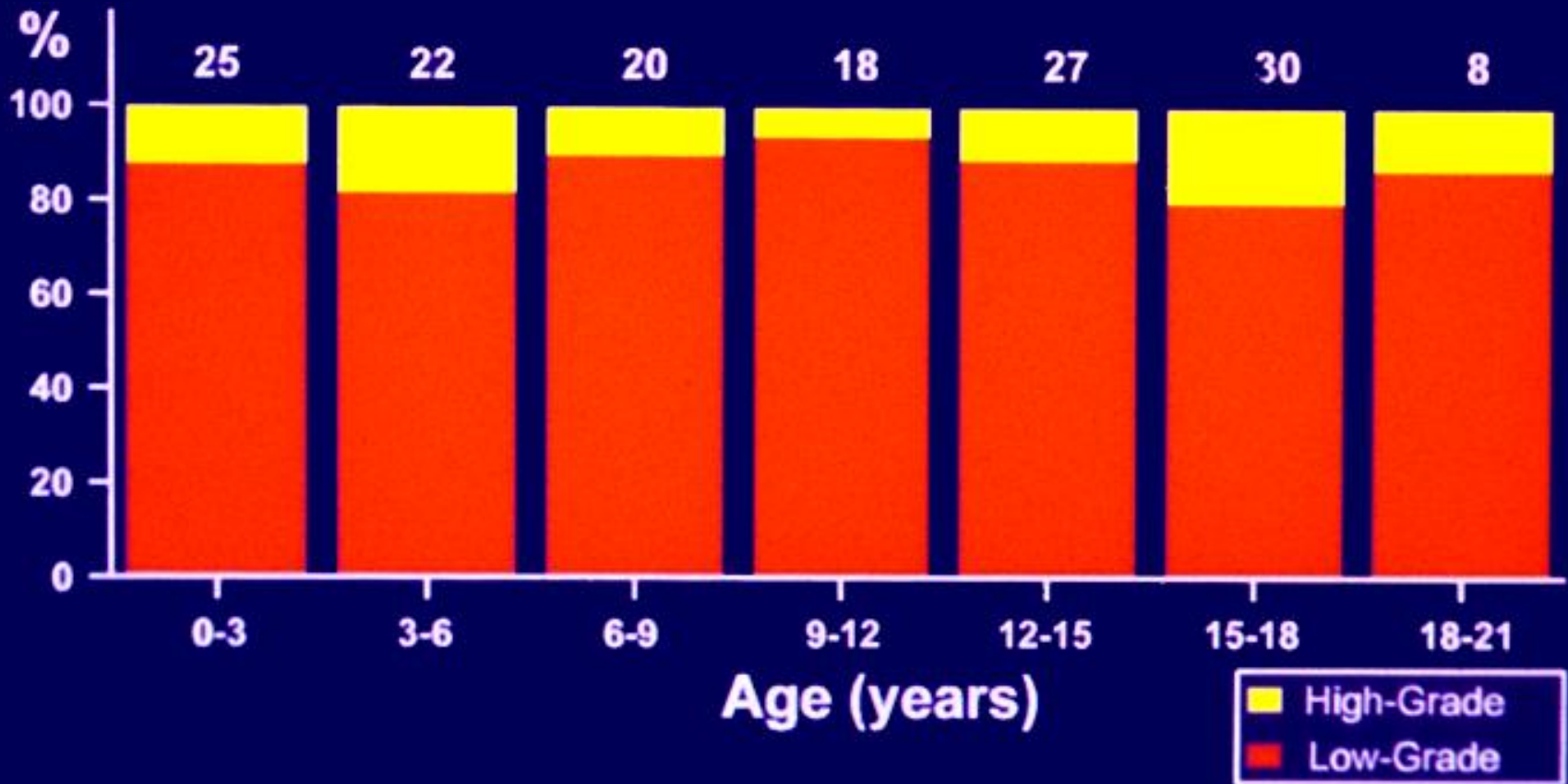
Type of Resection	No. of Patients (%)	
	1st Op	2nd Op
GTR (>95%) <small>clean MR</small>	126 (76.8) (66)	29 (70.7)
STR (80-95%)	33 (20.1) (30)	11(26)
partial	5 (3.0) (4)	1 (2.4)
	164	41

*In Yellow SC's data on 75 cases*

*Note the STR is still a very aggressive surgery!*



# LOW GRADE VERSUS HIGH-GRADE TUMORS ACCORDING TO AGE



# Histo-pathology (164 Ped IMSCTS)

<u>Histological Type</u>	<u>No. of Tumors</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Astrocytoma	76	46.3
Low grade	58	
Anaplastic	14	
Glioblastoma	4	
Ganglioglioma	44	26.8
Ependymoma	19	11.6
Regular	12	
Myxopapillary	7	
Mixed glioma	10	6.1
Astro/Oligo	6	
Astro/Oligo/Ependymoma	1	
Astro/Ependymoma	3	
GGNC	11	6.7
GNF	3	1.8
PNET	1	0.6

## Children:

- Ependymomas are rare
- No pilocytic astrocytomas
- No pure oligo's
- The GG issue in NY
- HG group=19

## Adults:

- Ependymoma 65%
- Astrocytoma 25%
- Others 15%

# FUNCTIONAL GRADE BEFORE OR

Grade	n	%
1	15	9.1
2	76	46.3
3	33	20.1
4	22	13.4
5	18	11.0

I - neurologically intact; walks normally; may have minimal dysesthesia

II - mild motor or sensory deficit; maintains functional independence  
(walking, feeding, & using the bathroom)

III - moderate deficit; limitation of function; independent with external aid

IV - more severe motor or sensory deficit; limited function with dependency

V - paraplegia or quadriplegia (even if there is flickering movement)

\*Scale modified from McCormick PC, Torres R, Post KD, et al:  
*J Neurosurg* 72:523–532, 1990.

# PREOPERATIVE COMPARED WITH POSTOPERATIVE FUNCTIONAL GRADES (164 PATIENTS) WITH IMSCTS

Preop Grade	Postoperative Grade					No. Patients
	I	II	III	IV	V	
I	10	4		1		15
II	6	50	11	6	3	76
III	1	10	13	6	3	33
IV		1	5	11	5	22
V			1	2	15	18
total patients	17	65	30	26	26	164

*Below the line: Improvement!*

# MORBIDITY

## No effect:

- Symptomatology length
- Previous treatment (OR-RT-Chemo)
- Tumor level
- Cysts
- Enhancement
- Span
- Age
- Extent of resection (tribute to FE)
- Histology (high Vs. low grade)

## Negative effect

- Higher Functional grade!!!  $p=0.032$
- Children with shunts  $p=0.029$

# MORBIDITY

## FE RESULTS

60.4%

Same

15.8%

Improved

23.8%

Deteriorated

7.9%

Deteriorated >1 grade 13/164

2.4%

Deteriorated >2 grades

## SC RESULTS

54%

20%

26%

4%

4%

*In second half of study; No patient in Grade 1  
deteriorated more than 1 grade*

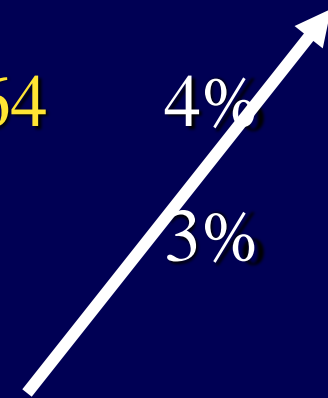
# MORBIDITY

## FE RESULTS

60.4%	Same
15.8%	Improved
23.8%	Deteriorated
7.9%	Deteriorated >1 grade 13/164
2.4%	Deteriorated >2 grades

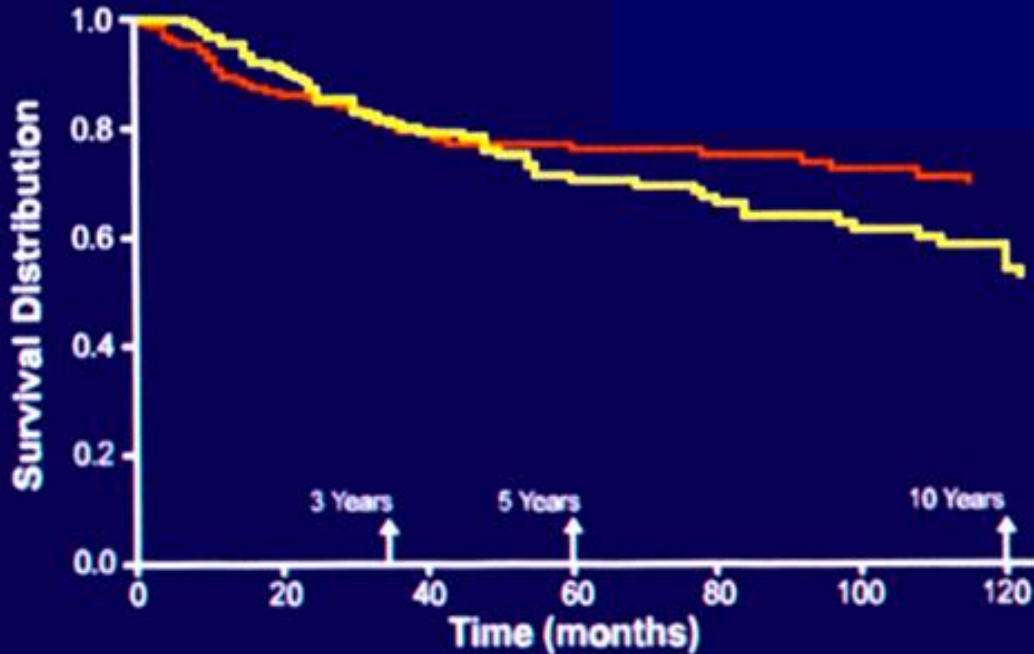
## SC RESULTS

54%	
20%	
26%	
4%	
3%	



90% of deteriorating adult patients:  
Sensory

# SURVIVAL & PROGRESSION FREE SURVIVAL (PFS) 155 CHILDREN WITH IMSCT

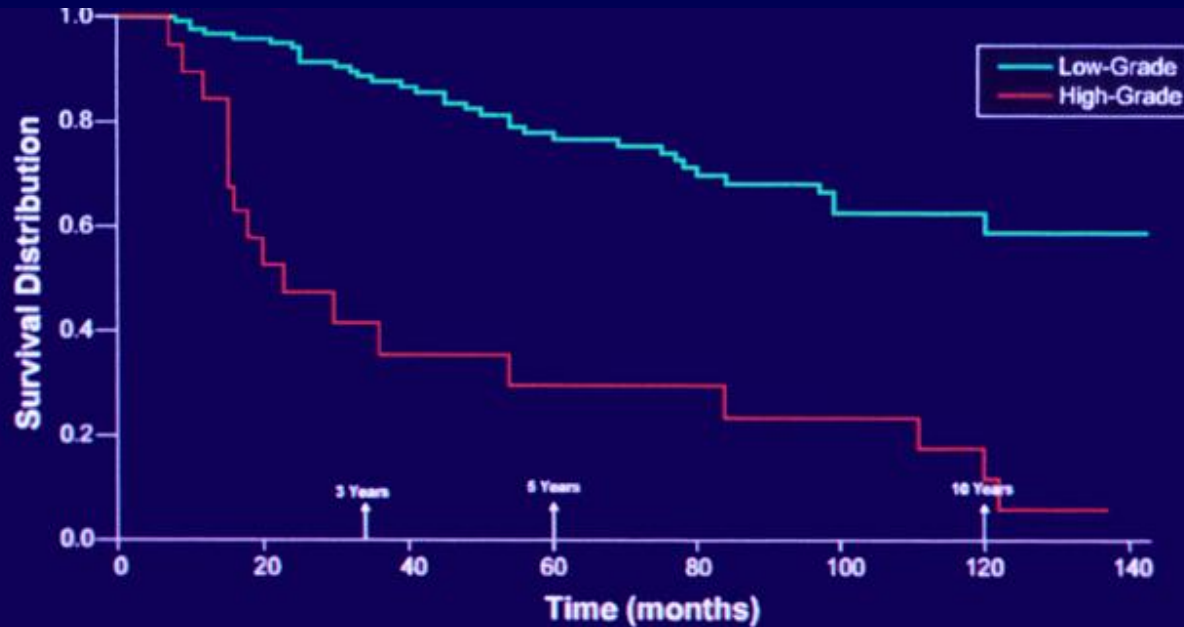


	No. of cases	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
<b>Survival</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>0.80</b> <b>(0.74-0.86)*</b>	<b>0.76</b> <b>(0.69-0.83)</b>	<b>0.70</b> <b>(0.61-0.79)*</b>
<b>Progression Free Survival</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>0.80</b> <b>(0.74-0.86)*</b>	<b>0.71</b> <b>(0.63-0.79)</b>	<b>0.54</b> <b>(0.44-0.64)*</b>

\* 95% confidence interval



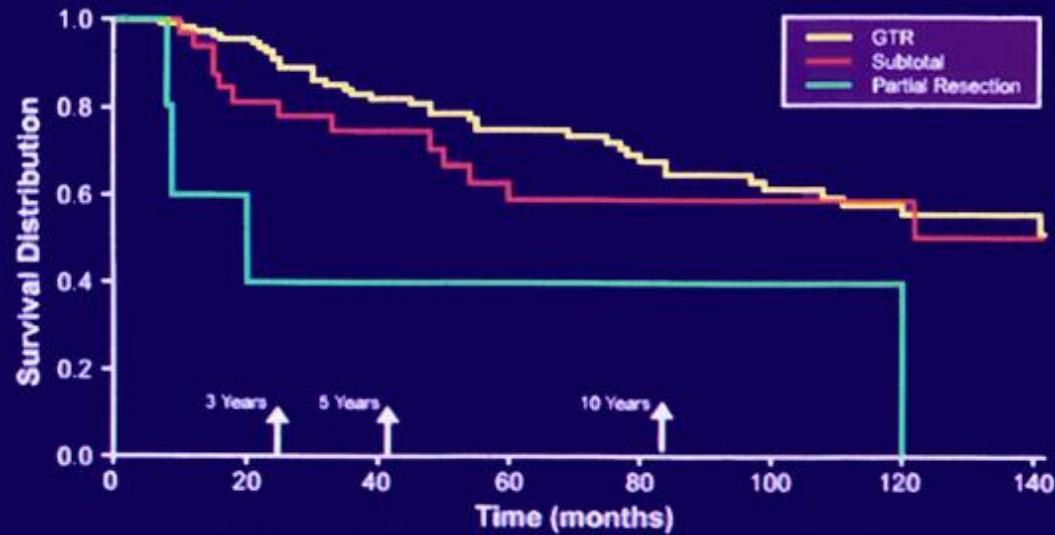
# PROGRESSION FREE SURVIVAL FOR LOW-GRADE VERSUS HIGH-GRADE IMSCT



	No. of Cases	3 Years	5 years	10 Years
Low Grade	124	0.88 (0.12-0.94)*	0.78 (0.70-0.86)*	0.63 (0.52-0.74)*
High Grade	19	0.36 (0.13-0.57)*	0.30 (0.08-0.51)*	0.12 (0-0.27)*

\* 95% confidence interval  $p < 0.0001$

# EFFECT OF EXTENT OF RESECTION ON PROGRESSION FREE SURVIVAL



\* 95% confidence interval p=0.001

	No. of cases	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
GTR (>95%)	117	0.83 (0.76-0.90)*	0.75 (0.67-0.84)*	0.56 (0.45-0.67)*
Subtotal (80-95%)	33	0.75 (0.60-0.90)*	0.59 (0.41-0.77)*	0.59 (0.41-0.77)*
Partial Resection	5	0.40 (0-0.03)*	0.40 (0-0.83)*	0

At 3 & 5 years; significant difference. At 10y no! True for the entire

# FOLLOW UP

N	155	(9 Pts. Lost)
Average	7.09years	1-16 years
Only Surgery	73.5%	

116 alive (74.8%)

39 dead (25.2%)

**•33/39 who died, from lepto-meningeal disease**

# Tumor recurrence

- 58 patients: mean time to Rec: 38m
  - Typically in original site
  - 37: repeat surgery
    - Of these 26 alive (8y) later
- Same morbidity!

*Re-surgery is an option when a LG  
tumor recurs*

# Clinical status at follow-up

- 116 pt with a mean follow-up of 13.1y
- >60% grade I or II
- 65% are independent
- 86% normal schooling
- 72% kypho-scoliosis      27.1% Surgery

**Urinary problems: 40.5%**

**Pain in 6.9%**

Still an extremely challenging disease!

# CONCLUSIONS

- Surgery for IMSCT's in children can be performed radically & **rather** safely.
- The postoperative functional performance is determined by the preoperative defect
- IMSCT's should be recognized as potentially excisable lesions upon their presentation & when they recur.
- **Less than radical tumor removal in IMSCT's may be sufficient for low-grade lesions.**
- The optimal treatment for malignant lesions is still to be determined.

# **Tc MEP's: Where are we today**

**Interesting**

**Informative**

**Useful**

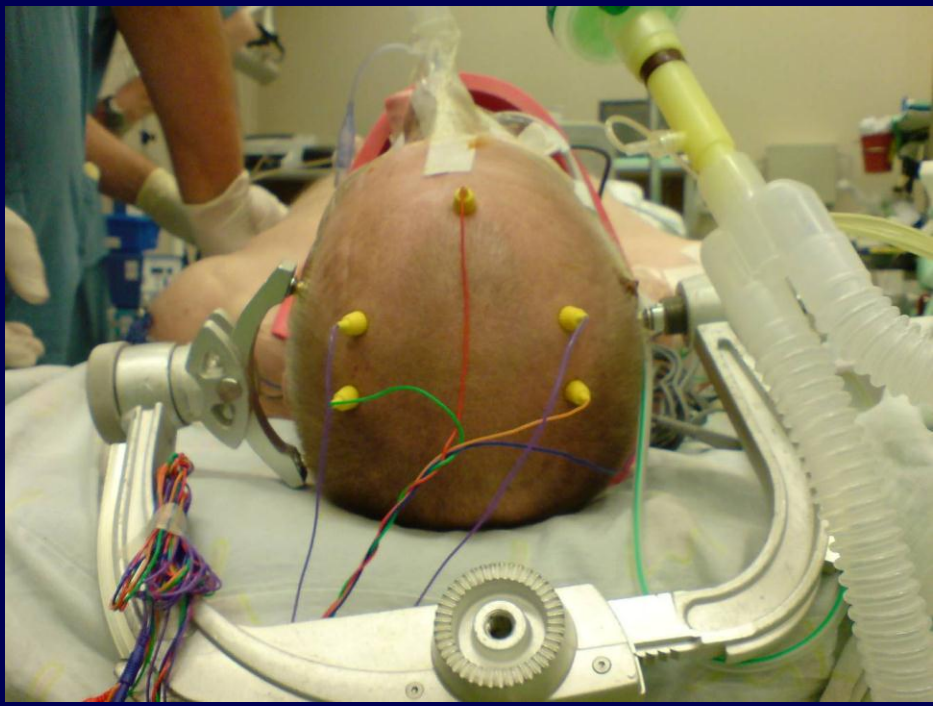
**Extremely useful**

**Increase safety**

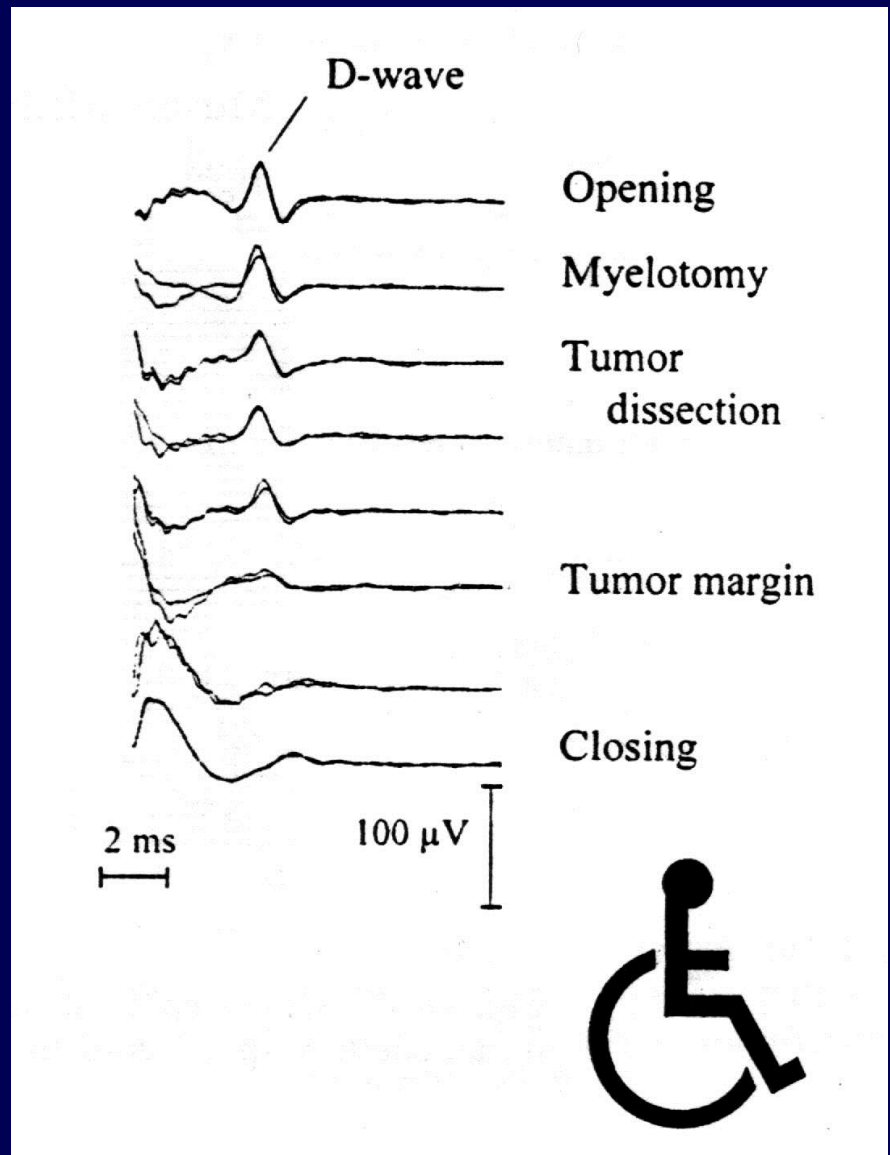
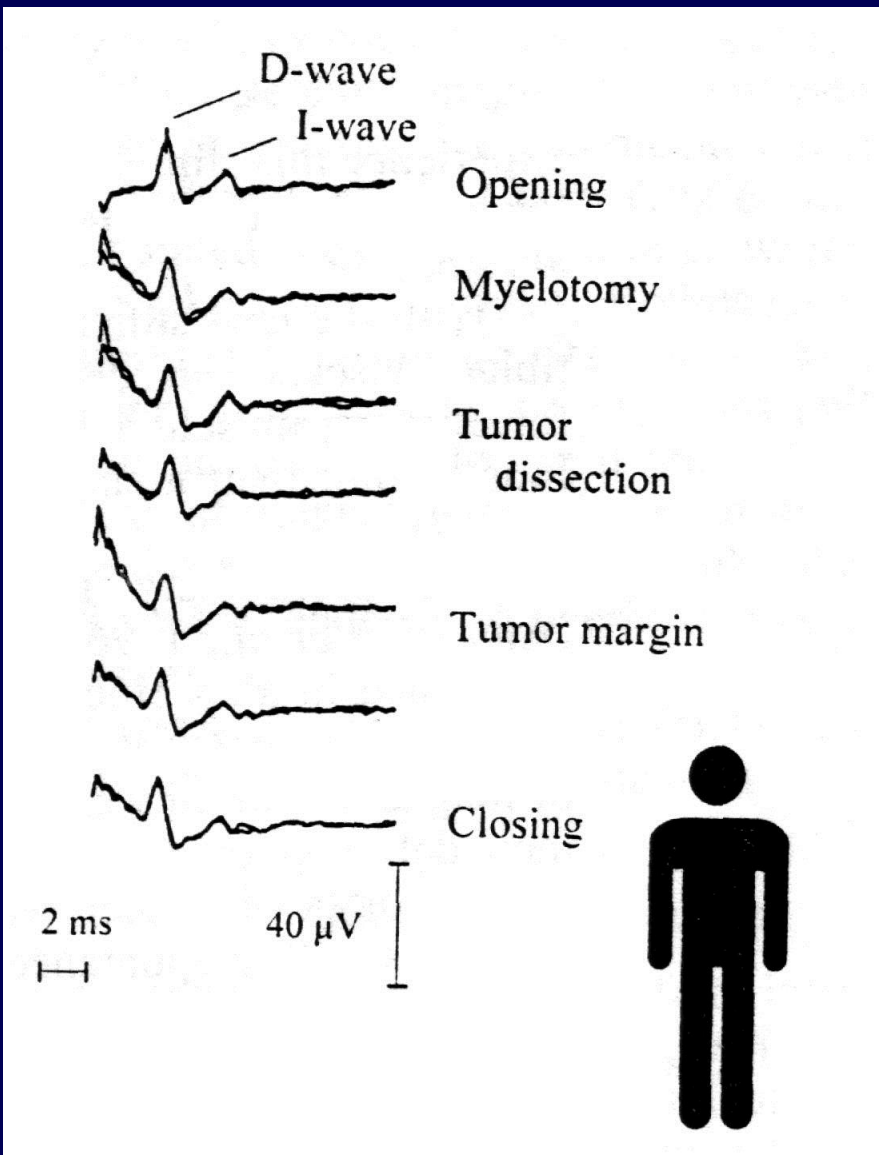
**Mandatory?**

**Standard of care?**

# Standard MEP stimulation & SSEP recording setup







**MEP's: sensitive and not always specific!**

*Patients may not be "monitorable"*

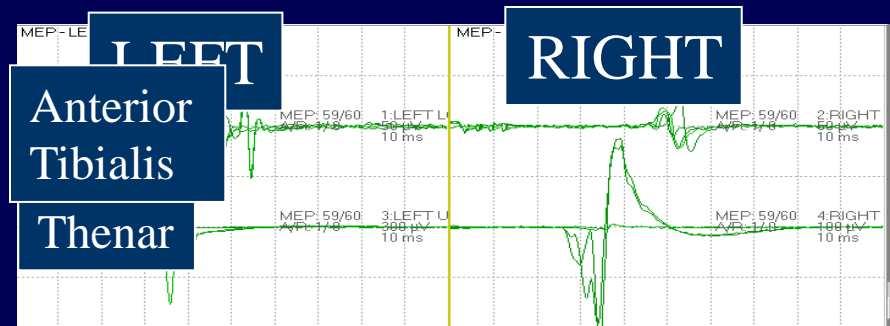
# Trans-cranial- Motor Evoked Potentials (tcMEP)

Morota, Deletis, Constantini, Kofler, Cohen, Epstein

The role of motor evoked potentials (MEP's) during surgery for intra-medullary spinal cord tumors.

Neurosurgery 41 (6) 1327-1336 1996

*We did not have enough disasters*



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## The Role of Motor Evoked Potentials during Surgery for Intramedullary Spinal Cord Tumors

Author(s): Morota,, Nobu MD; Deletis,, Vedran MD, PhD; Constantini,, Shlomi MD; Kofler,, Markus MD; Cohen,, Henry MPH; Epstein,, Fred J. MD

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## MOTOR EVOKED POTENTIAL MONITORING IMPROVES OUTCOME AFTER SURGERY FOR INTRAMEDULLARY SPINAL CORD TUMORS: A HISTORICAL CONTROL STUDY

**OBJECTIVE:** The value of intraoperative neurophysiological monitoring (INM) during intramedullary spinal cord tumor surgery remains debated. This historical control study tests the hypothesis that INM monitoring improves neurological outcome.

**METHODS:** In 50 patients operated on after September 2000, we monitored somatosensory evoked potentials and transcranially elicited epidural (D-wave) and muscle motor evoked potentials (INM group). The historical control group consisted of 50 patients selected from among 301 patients who underwent intramedullary spinal cord tumor surgery, previously operated on by the same team without INM. Matching by preoperative neurological status (McCormick scale), histological findings, tumor location, and extent of removal were blind to outcome. A more than 50% somatosensory evoked potential amplitude decrement influenced only myelotomy. Muscle motor evoked potential disappearance modified surgery, but more than 50% D-wave amplitude decrement was the major indication to stop surgery. The postoperative to preoperative McCormick grade variation at discharge and at a follow-up of at least 3 months was compared between the two groups (Student's *t* tests).

**RESULTS:** Follow-up McCormick grade variation in the INM group (mean, +0.28) was significantly better ( $P = 0.0016$ ) than that of the historical control group (mean, -0.16). At discharge, there was a trend ( $P = 0.1224$ ) toward better McCormick grade variation in the INM group (mean, -0.26) than in the historical control group (mean, -0.5).

**CONCLUSION:** The applied motor evoked potential methods seem to improve long-term motor outcome significantly. Early motor outcome is similar because of transient motor deficits in the INM group, which can be predicted at the end of surgery by the neurophysiological profile of patients.

**KEY WORDS:** Motor evoked potentials, Neurophysiological monitoring, Outcome, Spinal cord tumor

*Neurosurgery* 58:1129-1143, 2006

DOI: 10.1227/01.NEU.0000215948.97195.58

www.neurosurgery-online.com

The advent of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) now permits an early diagnosis of intramedullary spinal cord tumor (ISCT) (46), which has proven to fa-

Intraoperative neurophysiological monitoring (INM) has been increasingly used to assist in the surgical management of these tumors. Somatosensory evoked potentials (SEPs) have

# Tc MEP's: Intra-op classification

Non-Monitorable

Existing & stable MEP's

Existing-deteriorating-recover

Existing-deteriorating

*Simplistic approach!*

*“MEP's for dummies”*

# Tc MEP's: Intra-op classification

## Non-Monitorable

Existing & stable MEP's

Existing-deteriorating-recover

Existing-deteriorating

Around 30% (Morota-1996)

*These are the patients where MEP is most important*

# Tc MEP's: Intra-op classification

Non-Monitorable

**Existing & stable MEP's**

Existing-deteriorating-recover

Existing-deteriorating

*“allowing” further resection (Re-assurance)*

*What is the rate of False-negative (D Waves & mMEP)??*

*Prolongation of the surgeon's life-expectancy*

# Tc MEP's: Intra-op classification

Non-Monitorable

Existing & stable MEP's

**Existing-deteriorating-recover**

Existing-deteriorating

Abort??

Yes! Immediately??

Check for “technical” reasons, wait (how long?), Change place

# Tc MEP's: Intra-op classification

Non-Monitorable

Existing & stable MEP's

**Existing-deteriorating-recover**

Existing-deteriorating

**What is a “significant” deterioration?**



# What is a “significant MEP drop?”

- When you lose muscle MEP's
  - Binary measurement
  
- When D-wave  $<50\%$ 
  - Quantitative

# Tc MEP's: Intra-op classification

Non-Monitorable

Existing & stable MEP's

Existing-deteriorating-recover

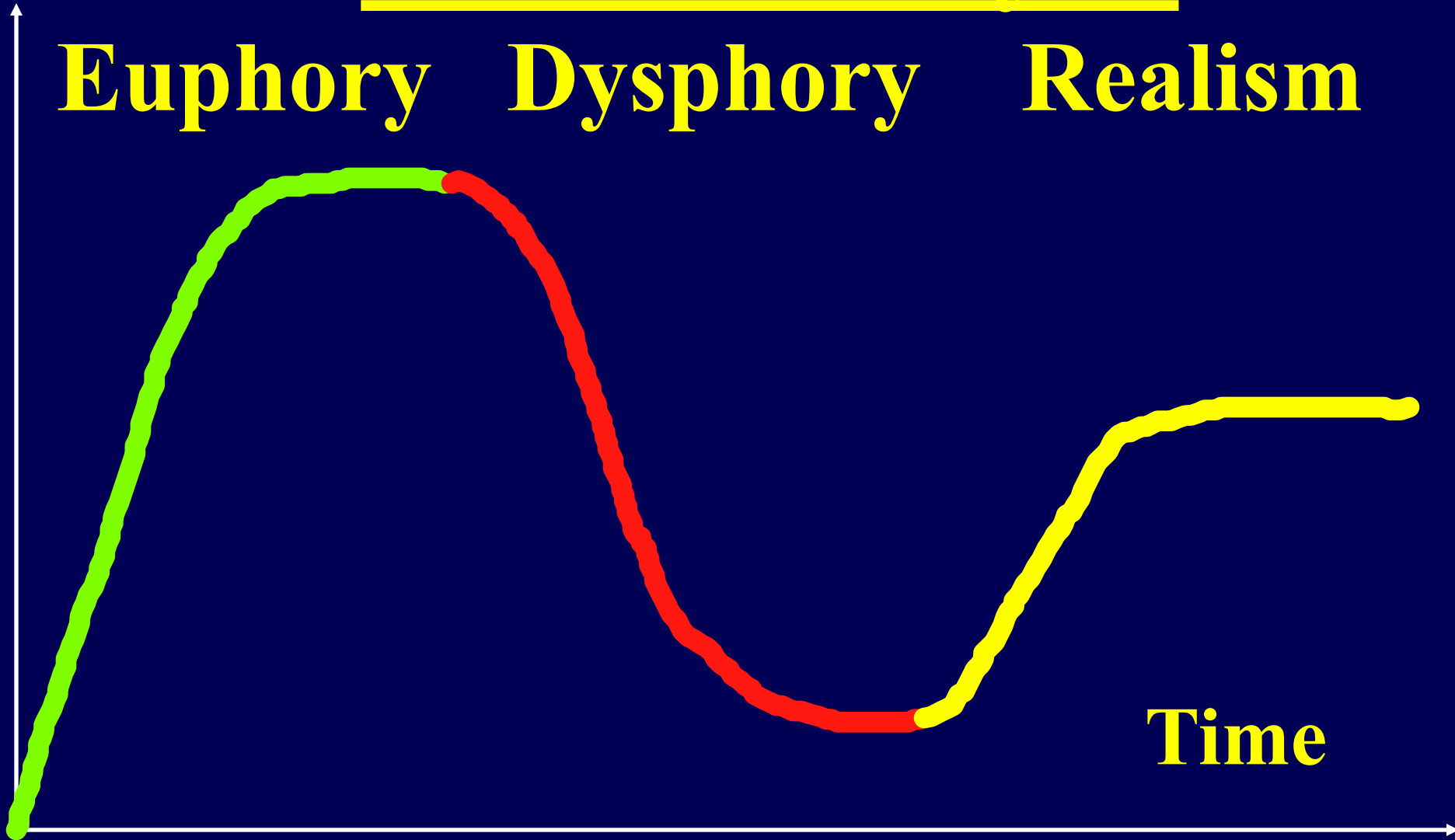
**Existing-deteriorating**

Decision-making is difficult! Has to be individualized

First-do-no-harm

# Innovation Cycle

**Euphory**   **Dysphory**   **Realism**



From Aschoff

# Tc MEP's: Where are we today?

**Interesting**

**Informative**

**Useful**

**Extremely useful**

**Increase safety**

**Mandatory?**

---

**Standard of care?**

*Our job is to learn more, train, educate*

There will be no Level-I evidence to show that IOM  
for SCT's improves resection & safety

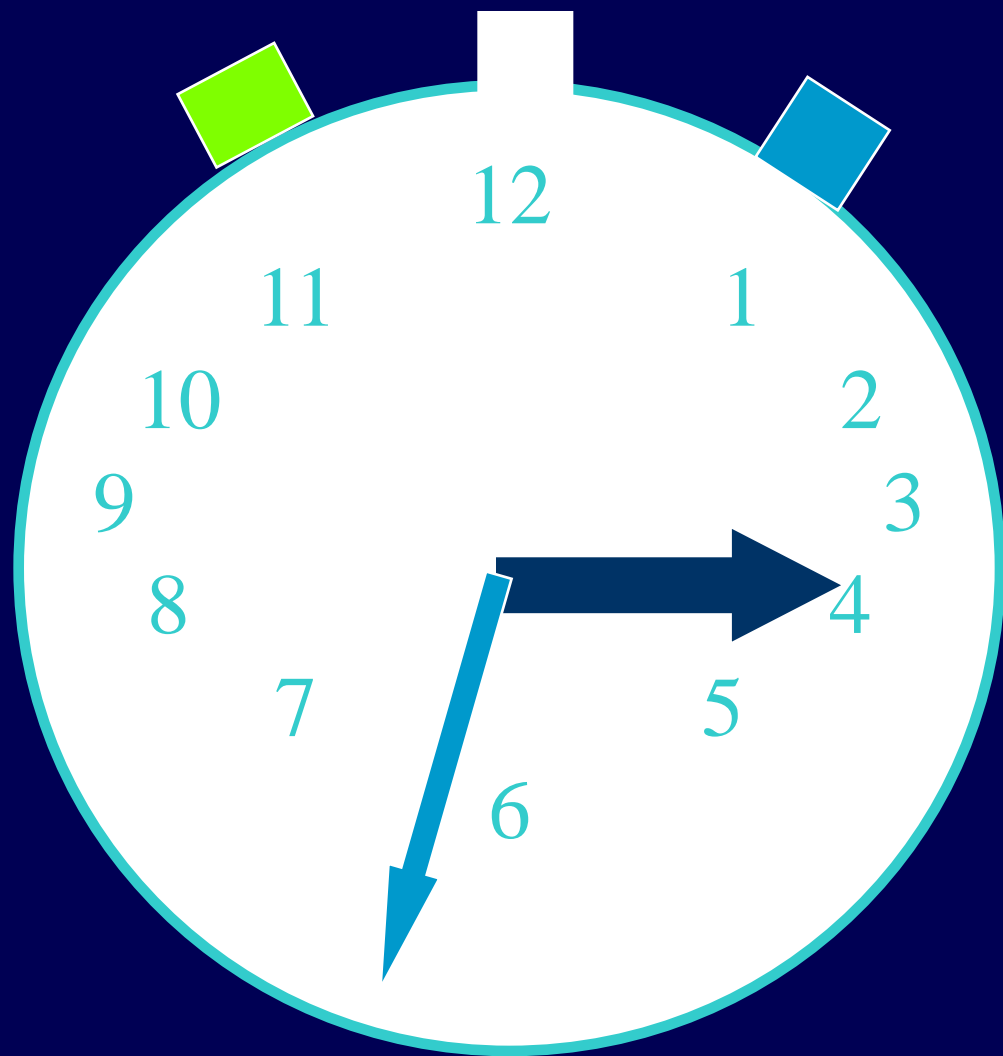


*Suggestion: multi-center cooperation and data collection*

# Bruegel's *The fight between Carnival & Lent*



Saving one patient from paraplegia



# The Challenge!

*Think!*

*Consult!*

*Listen!*

*Know your limitations!*





# Our fellows:



Russia, Turkey, Israel,  
Palestine, India, China,  
Greece



# Team Work

