

PRESS RELEASE

Birmingham, Alabama (March 25, 2006) – J. Antonio Aldrete, M.D., M.S., in collaboration with Corpus Editorial Publishers announces the publication of his book *The Failed Back Surgery Syndrome*. This 8-chapter, 62-page book explains in detail this medical condition, especially how to prevent it and warns about the misleading concept that “more is better”; this premise can not be applied to surgery of the spine. The book contains illustrations and radiological images depicting all possible diagnostic images found in FBSS.

Those who might have read the first edition of the “Arachnoiditis: the silent epidemic” book may wonder if this is a sequence to it and why the different focus toward the failed back surgery syndrome (FBSS). This is a new topic and the readers deserve an explanation. From the time I began taking care of patients with this insidious disease, in 1989, I have noticed certain trends; in general and rounding numbers, initially, about 40% of patients had began to experience symptoms suggestive of arachnoiditis (ARC) after a pantopaque myelogram, though frequently, they went on to have spinal surgery, as well. There were also, about an equal number (30%) of patients that had developed ARC after spinal surgery and others that developed it after having pain relief procedures before or after spinal surgery.

In the last two decades, a relatively new descriptive diagnosis, has been coined labeling it the “Failed Back Surgery Syndrome (FBSS)”, also entitled “Failed Back Syndrome (FBS)”, when surgery was not involved; it appears to me that this denomination has been given to more and more patients, every day. The rationale for this nomenclature is not evident but it seems to be related to patients with an unspecific diagnosis of “low back pain” who after having one or more operations and many interventions in the spine, reach a point where no further operation is feasible or indicated. The apparent representation appears to be a trend to perform a series of treatment modalities; eventually, over a period of two to six years, if not improved, then the patients are given again an ultra, non-specific diagnosis suggesting that the patients’ back, failed to get better. This unfair terminology essentially avoids having to list one by one, every diagnosis that patients end up with, after numerous and sometimes repeated therapeutic attempts failed to alleviate their initial symptomatology.

This book is crucial for every physician dealing with patients having this diagnosis and is a must for any patient contemplating the first, the second, third or fourth operation on their spine.

J. Antonio Aldrete

The Failed Back Surgery Syndrome

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J. Antonio Aldrete

The Failed Back Surgery Syndrome

Jorge Antonio Aldrete, MD, MS is a groundbreaking anesthesiologist, expert researcher, skilled teacher and pain management specialist, but it is his interest in people and their alleviating suffering that sets him apart. Dr Aldrete says his actions are guided by the phrase "Compassionate consideration of a patient's suffering goes a long way toward relieving emotional pain and trauma. Doctors and nurses in the operating rooms of every North American hospital use the Aldrete score to assess the condition of patients who have undergone anesthesia. Internationally recognized for his hands-on work. Dr Aldrete has published more than 480 articles and abstracts in medical journals and 80 chapters in textbooks, and he is the author of 12 published medical books. Dr Aldrete is also the founder and president of the Arachnoiditis Foundation, Inc. His extensive career in anesthesiology and pain management has changed the way doctors approach the treatment of patients worldwide; his contribution to the relief of pain and suffering is unsurpassed.

Dr Aldrete has contributed to many areas of anesthesia. He was the first physician to consider the emotional responses of patients during surgery, and his studies led to the publication of a book, "The Hidden Dimension: Emotional Responses and Psychological Responses to Anesthesia and Surgery", published in 1980 with Frank Guerra. A series of related articles about the human factor in anesthesia were published in *Anesthesiology News* from 1981 to 1985 and was published as a book, "The Human Factor in Anesthesia, Surgery and Intensive Care", in 2004.

Dr Aldrete's commitment to relieve pain and suffering has taken him on several special missions. He led the medical group that assisted the Mexican Red Cross after the 1985 earthquake and oversaw the transfer of medical supplies and equipment from the Colorado Medical Society to the Secretaría de Salubridad de México, after many Mexican hospitals had been destroyed. In the following year, he led a medical group that assisted the Salvadoran Red Cross after the 1986 earthquake. "Contras and rebels would steal the anesthesia machines", remembered Dr Aldrete. "We would have to anchor the machine to the floor to keep it from disappearing."

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