Preface

Despite recent innovations in smaller incision and less invasive approaches to the heart, the median sternotomy still remains, by far, the most commonly used approach. This incision provides excellent anatomic access to all areas of the heart surface, intra-cardiac structures and the great vessels. The median sternotomy is also an incision that heals very well in most patients and with minimum morbidity.

While the future may see fewer open surgical valve repairs or replacements, and particularly in the aortic position, several large recent Trials (SYNTAX, EXCEL, NOBLE) have confirmed the superiority of CABG over stents for most patients with coronary artery disease and certainly those with more severe disease. However, this population also increasingly contains a higher proportion of patients whose co-morbidities, such as diabetes and obesity, may predispose to potentially major sternal wound problems. This is particularly so with the use of two internal mammary arteries which may offer patients, particularly those with Diabetes, better long term outcomes than a single mammary artery but at the cost of increased sternal wound healing problems. While advances in wound management have reduced the previously high mortality associated with sternal dehiscence, major wound complications can still lead to other important clinical problems and prolonged hospital stay, with their very expensive adverse economic sequelae.

The authors should therefore be congratulated on the content and timeliness of this current text book. It comprehensively covers all aspects of sternal wound management from pathophysiology and predispositions to diagnoses and treatment of complications. It reviews the latest invasions and technologies that may potentially reduce, or indeed prevent, sternotomy wound complications. The book makes ideal reading for all who are involved in the care of such patients.

David P. Taggart MD (Hons), PhD, FRCS, FESC
Professor of Cardiovascular Surgery
University of Oxford
Deep Sternal Wound Infections
Horch, R.E.; Willy, C.; Kutschka, I. (Eds.)
2016, X, 138 p., Hardcover
ISBN: 978-3-662-49764-7