

Advancing Pediatric Neurosurgery: Precision, Personalization, and Progress

David Kim

Department of Trauma Surgery, Seoul National University College of Medicine, Seoul, South Korea

Introduction

Recent advancements in pediatric neurosurgery are significantly improving outcomes for complex brain disorders. Minimally invasive techniques, such as endoscopic-assisted surgeries and focused ultrasound, are reducing morbidity and recovery times. The application of advanced imaging, including intraoperative MRI and neuronavigation, enhances surgical precision and safety. Furthermore, genetic insights are guiding personalized treatment strategies for conditions like pediatric brain tumors and congenital malformations [1]. The integration of stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) and neurosurgical approaches offers a powerful paradigm shift for treating pediatric brain arteriovenous malformations (AVMs). Combining these modalities can achieve higher obliteration rates with reduced risk compared to either treatment alone, particularly for complex or deep-seated lesions [2]. Navigational techniques are becoming indispensable in pediatric neurosurgery, especially for deep-seated or complex lesions. Advanced neuronavigation systems, augmented by intraoperative imaging, allow for real-time visualization and precise instrument guidance, minimizing damage to critical neurological structures and improving resection margins for tumors and congenital abnormalities [3]. Endoscopic techniques are revolutionizing the treatment of hydrocephalus and certain brain tumors in children. Ventriculoscopic procedures, such as third ventriculostomy and fenestration of arachnoid cysts, offer less invasive alternatives to shunting, potentially reducing infection rates and shunt-related complications [4]. Advances in the molecular understanding of pediatric brain tumors are paving the way for targeted therapies. Genomic profiling is identifying specific mutations and pathways that can be targeted with novel drug combinations, moving beyond traditional chemotherapy and radiotherapy [5]. The management of pediatric craniosynostosis has seen significant progress with the adoption of distraction osteogenesis and advanced imaging. These techniques allow for more predictable and stable correction of skull deformities, improving both aesthetic and functional outcomes for affected children [6]. The advent of robotic-assisted surgery in pediatric neurosurgery holds promise for enhanced dexterity and precision. While still evolving, early applications for tumor biopsies and lesion resection demonstrate potential for reduced invasiveness and improved visualization in complex pediatric neurosurgical cases [7]. The management of pediatric spinal cord tumors has benefited from advances in surgical techniques and multimodal therapy. Improved intraoperative monitoring and refined surgical approaches aim to maximize tumor removal while preserving neurological function [8]. The increasing use of advanced neuroimaging, such as diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) and functional MRI (fMRI), is crucial for pre-operative planning in pediatric neurosurgery. These tools help delineate critical white matter tracts and eloquent brain areas, enabling surgeons to optimize resection strategies and minimize postoperative deficits [9]. Intraoperative neuromonitoring (IONM) is a cornerstone in minimizing neurological injury dur-

ing complex pediatric neurosurgical procedures. Advances in IONM technology and interpretation allow for real-time assessment of neural function, guiding surgical decision-making for conditions ranging from brain tumors to spinal deformities [10].

Description

Recent advancements in pediatric neurosurgery are significantly improving outcomes for complex brain disorders through the adoption of minimally invasive techniques. Procedures such as endoscopic-assisted surgeries and focused ultrasound are notably reducing patient morbidity and shortening recovery times, offering a less traumatic experience for young patients [1]. The integration of stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) with traditional neurosurgical approaches presents a powerful paradigm shift in the management of pediatric brain arteriovenous malformations (AVMs). This combined modality has demonstrated the capacity to achieve higher obliteration rates while concurrently reducing the risk of complications, especially in cases involving complex or deep-seated lesions [2]. Navigational techniques have become an indispensable component of pediatric neurosurgery, particularly when addressing deep-seated or intricate lesions. Sophisticated neuronavigation systems, enhanced by intraoperative imaging, provide real-time visualization and guide instruments with remarkable precision, thereby minimizing damage to critical neurological structures and improving resection margins for both tumors and congenital abnormalities [3]. Endoscopic techniques are actively revolutionizing the treatment strategies for hydrocephalus and specific types of brain tumors in children. Ventriculoscopic procedures, including third ventriculostomy and fenestration of arachnoid cysts, are emerging as less invasive alternatives to conventional shunting, potentially leading to a reduction in infection rates and shunt-related complications [4]. Significant strides in the molecular understanding of pediatric brain tumors are actively paving the way for the development of highly targeted therapies. Genomic profiling techniques are instrumental in identifying specific mutations and aberrant pathways that can be effectively targeted with novel drug combinations, representing a departure from conventional chemotherapy and radiotherapy [5]. The management of pediatric craniosynostosis has witnessed substantial progress with the widespread adoption of distraction osteogenesis and sophisticated advanced imaging techniques. These methods facilitate more predictable and stable correction of skull deformities, ultimately enhancing both the aesthetic and functional outcomes for affected children [6]. The emergence of robotic-assisted surgery in the field of pediatric neurosurgery holds considerable promise for enhancing surgical dexterity and overall precision. Early applications, particularly in tumor biopsies and lesion resections, suggest a potential for reduced invasiveness and improved visualization in challenging pediatric neurosurgical cases [7]. The management of pediatric spinal cord tumors has been

notably advanced by improvements in surgical techniques and the implementation of multimodal therapeutic strategies. Enhanced intraoperative monitoring and refined surgical approaches are meticulously designed to maximize tumor removal while rigorously preserving neurological function [8]. The increasing utilization of advanced neuroimaging modalities, such as diffusion tensor imaging (DTI) and functional MRI (fMRI), plays a crucial role in the pre-operative planning phase of pediatric neurosurgical interventions. These advanced tools are vital for delineating critical white matter tracts and eloquent brain areas, empowering surgeons to optimize resection strategies and minimize the risk of postoperative neurological deficits [9]. Intraoperative neuromonitoring (IONM) stands as a cornerstone in the effort to minimize neurological injury during complex pediatric neurosurgical procedures. Innovations in IONM technology and interpretation enable real-time assessment of neural function, providing essential guidance for surgical decision-making across a spectrum of conditions, from brain tumors to spinal deformities [10].

Conclusion

Pediatric neurosurgery is experiencing rapid advancements, particularly in minimally invasive techniques like endoscopy and focused ultrasound, which improve patient outcomes and recovery times. Advanced imaging, including intraoperative MRI and neuronavigation, enhances surgical precision and safety. Genetic insights are driving personalized treatments for conditions such as brain tumors and congenital malformations. The combination of stereotactic radiosurgery and surgical approaches is proving effective for pediatric brain arteriovenous malformations. Navigational systems and endoscopic procedures are becoming standard for complex lesions and hydrocephalus, respectively. Molecular understanding of pediatric brain tumors is leading to targeted therapies. Progress in craniosynostosis management includes distraction osteogenesis and advanced imaging. Robotic-assisted surgery and enhanced intraoperative neuromonitoring are showing promise for improved dexterity, precision, and neurological function preservation. Advanced neuroimaging, like DTI and fMRI, is critical for surgical planning.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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***Address for Correspondence:** David, Kim, Department of Trauma Surgery, Seoul National University College of Medicine, Seoul, South Korea, E-mail: david.kim@snu.ac.kr

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