



# Preface to special series: management of airways and vascular invasion in the mediastinum

The mediastinum is a region of the body containing several critical organs and structures. It is an extremely complex space through which course the central airways and the body's largest vessels, and it houses several lymph node stations. Taken together, when cancer is involved, this is an area where significant morbidity can occur. Each of these structures can be the primary site of malignancy or the downstream casualty of tumor invasion, or both. Given the burden of disease that this can cause for patients, a thorough understanding of how to evaluate, manage, or refer these patients is needed for clinicians.

In this special series, we review the invasion of both airway and vascular structures within the mediastinum. We will begin with an overview of central airway obstruction followed by respective thorough treatments of airway stenting and therapeutic bronchoscopy outcomes each in their own article. We then cover the difficult and serious condition of aero-digestive fistula and uniquely discuss each from the gastroenterologist perspective and the bronchoscopist perspective. We conclude the series by examining endovascular interventions for vascular compression as well as considerations for anesthesia in patients with mediastinal pathology that can threaten both ventilation and blood flow.

It is our hope that this series will prove to be an up-to-date educational tool for providers that manage patients with the aforementioned conditions. While such patients can be medically complex and no journal series can be exhaustive, we have sought to present clinically useful information in a concise yet thorough manner, furnished by experts in their respective disciplines.

## Acknowledgments

*Funding:* None.

## Footnote

*Provenance and Peer Review:* This article was commissioned by the editorial office, *Mediastinum* for the series "Management of Airway and Vascular Invasion in the Mediastinum". The article did not undergo external peer review.

*Conflicts of Interest:* Both authors have completed the ICMJE uniform disclosure form (available at <https://med.amegroups.com/article/view/10.21037/med-23-18/coif>). The series "Management of Airway and Vascular Invasion in the Mediastinum" was commissioned by the editorial office without any funding or sponsorship. R.F.C. served as the unpaid Guest Editor of the series and serves as an unpaid editorial board member of *Mediastinum* from April 2022 to March 2024. He also reports research grants from Siemens and Intuitive and he is a paid consultant for Siemens, Intuitive and Johnson and Johnson. B.F.S. served as the unpaid Guest Editor of the series. The authors have no other conflicts of interest to declare.

*Ethical Statement:* The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

*Open Access Statement:* This is an Open Access article distributed in accordance with the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0), which permits the non-commercial replication and distribution of the article with the strict proviso that no changes or edits are made and the original work is properly cited (including links to both the formal publication through the relevant DOI and the license). See: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.



Bruce F. Sabath



Roberto F. Casal

**Bruce F. Sabath, MD**

*The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA*

*(Email: bsabath@mdanderson.org)*

**Roberto F. Casal, MD**

*The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, TX, USA*

*(Email: RFCasal@mdanderson.org)*

**Keywords:** Bronchoscopy; interventional pulmonology; mediastinum; invasion; cancer

Received: 11 May 2023; Accepted: 24 May 2023; Published online: 25 June 2023.

doi: 10.21037/med-23-18

**View this article at:** <https://dx.doi.org/10.21037/med-23-18>

doi: 10.21037/med-23-18

**Cite this article as:** Sabath BF, Casal RF. Preface to special series: management of airways and vascular invasion in the mediastinum. *Mediastinum* 2023;7:31.