

Trauma Care: Beyond the Resuscitation Room

Edited by Peter Driscoll, David Skinner
BMJ Publishing Group 1998
Price £135.00. Pp 312
ISBN 0 7279 0933 9

In their introduction, the editors of this book write '...endeavours to be exhaustive in its scope from resuscitation to rehabilitation'. They are largely successful and I doubt if anyone involved in trauma care would not learn something from it. The book follows a logical progression beginning with initial assessment of the patient and leads through airway management, thoracic trauma, shock, and onto less well considered problems like radiation exposure and psychological sequelae.

The editors acknowledge the widespread use of the American College of Surgeons Advanced Trauma Life Support (ATLS) protocols and ATLS influence is clear throughout the book. There is, however, no slavish adherence to protocol in the book, with much discussion of those issues where ATLS has been criticized. For example, the airway chapter clearly describes the drugs and equipment required for rapid sequence induction but the reader is left in no doubt that this should be performed by an experienced anaesthetist.

Each chapter begins with a series of stated objectives and closes with a concise summary. Important clinical points are clearly highlighted and line drawings, diagrams and photographs are widely used to aid understanding. Clearly not every therapeutic manoeuvre can be described but important management principles are exhaustively detailed and much is made of timely communication between the many specialists needed to optimally manage trauma patients.

This book is excellent. Every accident department library should have a copy, as should any clinician regularly dealing with trauma.

Philip Young, Royal Hospital Haslar, Hampshire

Electrocardiography of Acute Myocardial Ischaemic Syndromes

Samuel Sclarovsky
Martin Dunitz 1999
Price £65.00. Pp 224
ISBN 1 85317 380 0

Understanding the electrocardiogram (ECG) in an acute coronary syndrome is essential to complete and appropriate patient management. Most textbooks provide only limited and at times confused guidance on patient stratification and localization of the culprit lesion. Samuel Sclarovsky attempts to explain the significance of the full range of changes seen acutely in the 12-lead ECG and provide a framework for applying these to determine a treatment strategy best suited to each individual.

The author uses his long experience and extensive references to take the reader through the different types of ischaemia along with the changes in morphology caused by collaterals and preconditioning. A method of studying the 12-lead ECG is detailed to allow determination of the culprit artery, level of obstruction and size of the vessel. Various forms of reperfusion and their clinical significance, together with associated tachyarrhythmias and bradycardias, are explained.

An excellent final chapter consists of sixteen case studies that highlight all features discussed and relates them to clinical applications. The text is let down by often poor and at times inaccurate reproductions of ECGs and other images, particularly problematic in a book of this type.

Trainee cardiologists and interested generalists will gain a great deal from this book. The content is not well described elsewhere and this book would be a good addition to postgraduate libraries.
Brian Clapp, Whittington Hospital, London

Critical Reviews in Psychiatry

Edited by Tom Brown and Greg Wilkinson
Gaskell 1999
Price £15.00. Pp 213
ISBN 1 901242 27 7

This book is excellent value at £15.00, despite the fact that it contains material available for free from the Royal College of Psychiatrists. In spring 1999, the college made a major change to the MRCPsych Part II examination, when the short answer question was replaced by the critical review paper. This book contains well-worked through examples covering the understanding and practice of evidence-based medicine as applied to critical review. It will prove a valuable guide to trainees preparing for this exam, not only for the level of specific knowledge they need to review a paper, but also for an understanding of how critical appraisal stimulates research to test border areas of psychiatric knowledge in clinical practice.

Some trainees may find it hard to complete the test papers in 1 hour. However, the editors give tips on how to use this book in their introduction, which are extremely helpful and relevant, and clearly trainees must test themselves against the clock. If this remains disheartening, they should bear in mind that by the time these examples have been worked through the trainee will at least be considerably more practiced in the techniques required to complete the task in hand.

David Sturgeon, UCL Hospitals, London

Infectious Diseases

Donald Armstrong, Jonathan Cohen
Churchill Livingstone 1999
Price £250.00. Pp 2000
ISBN 0 7234 2328 8

Many infectious diseases are preventable and others may be treated successfully, but deaths from infectious diseases worldwide head mortality league tables. Wars, poverty, increased urbanization and intercontinental travel all contribute to creating this stark statement. The AIDS pandemic, resurgence of tuberculosis, malaria and child viral infections, together with an increasing population of immunosuppressed patients, are also factors.

Patients with infectious diseases present an increasingly varied and complex challenge to clinicians. The editors of this text, internationally renowned figures with decades of both academic and 'hands on' clinical experience, indicate that their aim has been to meet the challenge posed by infectious diseases. This text more than delivers this aim — providing a unique resource of value both to specialists in infectious diseases and clinical microbiology and also to the general physician, haematologist, paediatrician and gynaecologist faced with an 'infection problem'. The editors have brought together an international who's who to create this masterpiece of a textbook. In contrast to many multiauthor texts where repetition and/or contradictory statements mar the impact, rigorous editorial control has been



exerted here and the result is a comprehensive seamless description of infectious diseases. The quality of the colour illustrations is remarkable and has clearly benefited from the latest digital scanning technology.

The book provides its comprehensive coverage of infectious diseases by dividing the subjects into separate sections. There are two volumes to this text: in the first, after the introduction to infectious diseases, a section describes infection syndromes by body system, followed by a section on special problems in infectious disease practice. The first volume ends with the section on the subject of infection in the immunocompromised host. This, together with the first section of volume two on HIV and AIDS, provides the most comprehensive and authoritative account for the problems encountered in managing a patient with impaired immunity that I have seen. The remainder of volume two is filled by geographical and travel medicine, anti-infective therapy and clinical microbiology.

In contrast to other texts, the authors provide clear evidence-based advice on what to do, rather than merely reviewing possible treatment options. In this regard the text is a leader. In the era of clinical governance this is an important development for an international textbook. Clearly other texts, not just on infectious diseases, will have to follow suit.

The accompanying CD-ROM contains not only all the illustrations from the paper version of the book, but also a comprehensive list of websites related to infection. This is the definitive text on infectious diseases and will be widely used by doctors in many specialties, as it provides the ultimate resource for information on this subject.

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