

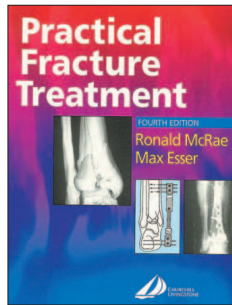
Practical Fracture Treatment (4th edn)

Ronald McRae, Max Esser
Churchill Livingstone 2002
Price £33.99. Pp 431
ISBN 0443070385

This is the fully updated version of McRae's text that has for many years been the standard trauma book for most junior emergency department doctors. In this edition the drawings and radiographs have been improved, as has the paper quality.

The book is in two sections. The first deals with general principles, the second with regional injuries. The general principles section runs through pathology, diagnosis, reduction techniques and casting, open fractures, complications of fractures and pathological fractures.

The regional injuries chapters all include relevant fractures and dislocations and their management. The AO classification is outlined and the chapter concludes with a self-test section.



There are two features that the new edition encompasses which will be particularly useful. The section on recording and communicating highlights those details that should be recorded in the notes and also how to describe a fracture over the telephone. It also encourages the reason for the call to be made clear (i.e. 'just to let you know', to seek advice or 'come in – I need help'). Similarly, the chapter on the fracture clinic provides useful advice to those new to the environment and should be read by all orthopaedic senior house officers.

This book does not intend to be a comprehensive textbook of fracture management. It continues to be an excellent 'shop-floor' book for orthopaedic and emergency department senior house officers. I have no hesitation in recommending it and every emergency department should have at least one copy readily available.

Robert U Ashford, Harrogate District Hospital

Bandolier's Little Book of Pain

Andrew Moore, Jayne Edwards, Jodie Barden, Henry McQuay
Oxford University Press 2003
Price £19.99. Pp 453
ISBN 0192632477

We all try to base our practice on good evidence. Bandolier are well known for their approach to evidence, and most doctors have used their website or journal to help decide on the status of evidence in their field of interest. The Bandolier site was born from the Oxford Pain Internet Site, which contains a massive body of clear evidence that exists relating to the treatments available for pain. Much of this evidence is now collected concisely into this pocket book 'the book of the internet site'. The authors see the book and the Pain Internet Site as being mutually supportive.

Topics covered range from understanding the principles of evidence based medicine, through to consideration of the evidence for the treatment of acute pain, migraine and headache, chronic pain and arthritis. Due consideration is given to complementary therapies, as well as management issues, and of course cancer and palliative care.

This book does not win on size, but it certainly wins on value. It has to be the best £20-worth available.

Tim Nash, Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery, Liverpool

Evidence-based Dermatology

Edited by Hywel Williams, Michael Bigby, Thomas Diepgen, Andrew Herxheimer, Luigi Naldi, Berthold Rzany
BMJ Books 2003
Price £99.00. Pp 738
ISBN 0727914421

Every department should have a copy of this comprehensive book. A great deal of work has gone into sifting through every clinical trial, weighing it and assigning a value. Most major skin diseases are covered. It is not a guidelines document – it is a reference book. Some tables are exhaustive in their thoroughness. It focuses on treatment, where evidence is assessed. In places the authors make statements on investigations the values of which do not always seem to have been subjected to the same degree of inspection (e.g. investigation of dermatomyositis).

This book represents a systematic and disciplined approach to medicine. It is particularly useful for the big five – atopic eczema, psoriasis, acne, skin

cancer and fungal infections. The book will help departments formulate guidelines or introduce new treatments. It might be helpful in convincing trusts about the effectiveness of new therapies, e.g. tacrolimus.

There is something for dermatologists with niche interests who will undoubtedly gain a nugget of knowledge from reading the section on their pet subject. The evidence-based format might seem a bit rigid, even dogmatic, for those who prefer a more open approach, but even its critics must recognize that an evidence-based system is the acceptable face of medicine for many things.

The governance requirement for conformity, which expects a uniformity of quality and clinical approach, is well supported by the bottom lines given for the major diseases. However, evidence-based medicine is of less help to the doctor in the grey case where the diagnosis is not as clear cut, and where polypharmacy complicates management beyond that allowed for in the manicured clinical trials, where patients with multiple pathologies are often excluded.

In short, an essential book within its terms of reference.

David J Gawkrödger, Royal Hallamshire Hospital, Sheffield