

discussions presented here are quite vague. While this is true, and to some extent unavoidable, a few of the topics could probably have been more focused. Second, several of the discussions are repetitive or overlapping. While this does mirror the keyword feedback on which the reviews are based, condensing or combining such topics would help streamline the book and improve its usability. Finally, numerous spelling and grammatical errors are present throughout the book, to an extent that they become distracting at times. These errors also in some instances affect the factual accuracy of the book; for example, a discussion of closing capacity and functional residual capacity states that closing capacity is normally much less than functional residual capacity, but that functional residual capacity increases with age. Correction of these flaws would also improve the text.

Overall, *Anesthesiology Keywords Review* is a decent effort with a number of positive attributes. It takes a different approach than many existing board review texts by focusing on the keyword feedback obtained from in-service examinations. The multiple indices allow desired subjects to be looked up in several ways, and the content is well balanced to be concise yet adequately detailed. The key points and suggested readings for each topic allow either a quick scan of information or further investigation of a particular subject. Unfortunately, the errors mentioned above diminish the book's usefulness. If these are addressed in future editions, it can become a more valuable resource for board review.

**John D. Nachtigal, M.D.**, University of Kansas Medical Center, Kansas City, Kansas. jnachtigal@kumc.edu

## References

1. Miller RD, Fleisher LA, Johns RA, Savarese JJ, Wiener-Kronish JP, Young WL: Anesthesia, 6th edition. Philadelphia, Elsevier Churchill Livingstone, 2005
2. Barash PG, Cullen BF, Stoelting RK: Clinical Anesthesia, 5th edition. Philadelphia, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2006
3. Stoelting RK, Hillier SC: Pharmacology & Physiology in Anesthetic Practice, 4th edition. Philadelphia, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2006
4. Morgan GE, Mikhail MS, Murray MJ: Clinical Anesthesiology, 4th edition. New York, Lange Medical Books, 2006

(Accepted for publication April 6, 2009.)

**The Little ICU Book of Facts and Formulas.** By Paul L. Marino, M.D., Ph.D., F.C.C.M. Philadelphia, Lippincott Williams and Wilkins, 2008. Pages: 781. Price: \$38.00.

Intensive care units (ICUs) are overwhelming on first encounter. Trainees and others often face severity of illnesses, care processes, and advanced technologies that offer intellectual, physical, and moral challenges. There is a need for a safety net, a quick reference that aspiring clinicians can have immediately at hand. This reference should be compact, portable, and easily accessible. Reading it should be simple, but it must include sufficient information that supports the provision of comprehensive clinical approaches to patients. This fine line between simplicity and a full range of information can be difficult to achieve, but when present in a reference text, it can be a powerful mechanism to relieve anxiety in trainees and facilitate excellent patient care.

Does *The Little ICU Book of Facts and Formulas* deliver simple answers to a broad range of critical care medicine questions? Perhaps for novice trainees, but not for those who have passed beyond their introductions to critical care medicine. For example, on the day I received this book, I evaluated a patient with suspected meningitis. I subsequently was unable to find a sentence or table describing cere-

brospinal fluid analysis to differentiate the various causes of central nervous system infections.

The first few chapters of the text focus on basic issues of life in the ICU. They deal with behavioral issues relating to infection control and general prevention of ICU-related complications. All the relevant issues are addressed and supported by current data. The remaining initial chapters describe issues related to vascular access and hemodynamic monitoring. These chapters are comprehensive, including anatomy reviews, presentation of equipment, a stepwise technical approach, and general management and concerns. Basic biophysics is used appropriately to explain the reasons, methods, and limitation of each parameter.

The chapter on resuscitation in the ICU is well presented. It includes the biophysical rationale in fluid resuscitation, including recent practice guidelines for blood product transfusion and a discussion of the never-ending colloid *versus* crystalloid infusion controversy. Heart failure is included in this section, and the presentation contains an excellent physiologic explanation for both right and left ventricular dysfunction and a reasonable discussion of the differences between systolic and diastolic causes. However, it is when the book delves into management suggestions that both the power and limitations of a single author are manifest. For example, I believe that Marino's suggestion that the dose of furosemide recommended for heart failure (100 mg bolus then 40 mg/h that could be doubled in 12 h) would be considered to be highly unusual in the many practices.

I found that the Cardiology chapter contains an excellent overview of acute coronary syndromes and arrhythmias, and is based on recent data and recommendations. The Pulmonary chapter is adequate with its presentation of acute respiratory distress syndrome and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, but its review of mechanical ventilation is cursory and lacks basic definitions and explanations of modes of ventilation, breath types, and commentary on cycling. The Acid-Base Disorders chapter definitely is one of the most concise yet helpful reviews in this text. It includes a rational clinical diagnostic path thorough enough to include the "delta gap" and other concepts. It would have been perfect if it mentioned Stewart's strong ion gap theory and the osmolal gap in ethylene glycol intoxication. Another excellent chapter describes renal and electrolyte disorders and renal replacement therapy. It is packed with theoretical information and a diagnostic pathway for renal failure. It would have been improved, however, if it contained more information on continuous veno-venous hemofiltration and dialysis. The chapter about inflammation is an excellent resume of current understanding of sepsis and septic shock. Similar kudos can be extended for the chapter on nutrition. The Neuro-Critical Care section of the book focuses on the management of specific pathologies such as delirium, cerebral ischemia, and seizures. Unfortunately, it lacks a description of the comprehensive approach to altered mental status or coma. Perhaps most disappointing in this section is the short shrift given to ICU sedation. The toxin chapter is very superficial and really only addresses acetaminophen overdose.

Overall, *The Little ICU Book of Facts and Formulas* is a reasonable critical care manual for novice trainees as they first encounter the ICU. The author's focus on physiologic disturbances and their causes as opposed to a cookbook compendium of facts and quick therapeutics supports the ability of this pocket-sized manual to describe why events happen. The author expressed a desire in the book's preface to make this a compact reference for the bedside. I believe that it is a good resource for medical students, interns, and residents to read before going into the ICU.

**Yasser Kouatli, M.D.**, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan. yassere@med.umich.edu

(Accepted for publication April 20, 2009.)