

REVIEWS OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

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Anesthesia and Uncommon Diseases. Edited by J. L. Benumof. Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 1998. Pages: 670. Price \$95.00.

How could one better prepare this review than by putting the book, unannounced, on the shelves of the library of a busy teaching anesthesiology department? It did not take 2 days to be discovered, nor a week to become one of the most consulted references. As a group, uncommon diseases are not uncommon, and a busy practice provides everyday opportunities to consult this authoritative work.

From the junior resident to experienced staff, everyone benefits when looking for advice before providing anesthesia to intensive care to a patient with a rarely heard of syndrome. From Scheie's syndrome to obstructive sleep apnea, from periodic paralysis to craniofacial dysostoses, this book proved to be an invaluable source of information.

Most chapters follow the well-appreciated structure inherited from previous editions, starting with a general outline of relevant pathophysiology, followed by a quick description of each syndrome, to end with considerations about anesthesia management. References from the literature are organized conveniently, with subtitles to facilitate further research. Diverse and up-to-date, they provide this book with its exceptional value. We especially enjoyed consulting the outstanding section about mitochondrial diseases and neuromuscular syndromes in general, and the chapter concerning pediatric malformations and its most useful appendix listing approximately 450 malformative syndromes in alphabetical order of their principal anesthetic considerations. This is only one of the many clear and informative tables found in this book. Access to information is made easy by its flawless index section.

This fourth edition has been reorganized and is now divided into three main sections: uncommon diseases of specific organs and systems, problems by type of patients (namely pregnant women and children), and multisystemic problems. The latter section consists of two new chapters. The chapter about cancer-related problems constitutes a welcome addition at a time when treatment diversity, efficiency, and aggressivity has increased markedly and can lead to various physiologic or metabolic derangements susceptible to interfere with patient safety during anesthesia. The chapter about uncommon poisonings and intoxication comes more as a surprise. This 75-page section constitutes almost a book on its own, with a major focus on emergency and intensive care, rather than anesthesia management. The parts concerning anesthetic considerations of radiation therapy and chemotherapy could be placed more logically in the chapter about cancer. By nature, much of the other conditions evoked in the chapter about poisonings are very dependent on local factors. Medicines come in different presentations; mushrooms, spiders, and snakes usually have a limited geographic distribution, and recreational or illegal drugs vary from country to country. This aspect contrasts with the universal dimension of the other parts of the book.

In fact, this field is so large that many paragraphs seem superficially treated, sometimes at the expense of the practical anesthetic guidance for which readers are looking. This chapter has maybe the merit of disclosing the need for a reference textbook for anesthesiologists about poisoning and envenomation.

Four editions have been published at nearly 8-yr intervals. The only problem with the author's endeavor may precisely be that 8 yr is a long time in a field in which new knowledge is acquired so quickly, both at

the anesthesia side of the equation—new drugs, new monitoring, new surgical approaches—and at the medical side—better understanding of underlying mechanisms of diseases and, hence, of the links that may tie various syndromes together. *Anesthesia and Uncommon Diseases* would be an instant success on the Internet, allowing continuous updating by the authors, while still providing the excellence and access to its reference to the literature. In the meantime, this book should be on the shelves of every anesthesia department and in every preoperative or preanesthetic consultation office. One might only regret it does not come with a system that prevents it from being stolen.

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The Management of Chronic Pain—Second Edition. Edited by A. W. Diamond and S. W. Coniam. Oxford University Press, Pages: 178. Price: \$56.00.

This second edition Drs. Diamond and Coniam is intended, as described in the preface of the first edition, as a textbook of "how to handle the clinical problems that will confront the workers in a Pain Clinic." The book is directed toward an audience of "those who are starting work in a clinic as consultants, to those training in pain management, and to those whose curiosity is driving them to ask precisely what a pain clinic does." Toward these goals, the authors have produced a valuable introductory textbook concerning the clinical management of chronic pain. In 175 pages, this textbook reviews most of the common clinical problems managed by physicians in a pain clinic. The text is written clearly and organized logically into 11 chapters.

The first three chapters provide general descriptions of the development and philosophy of pain clinics in the United Kingdom, of pain perception, and of assessment of the patient in pain. The remainder of the text discusses various clinical pain problems and therapeutic approaches in the management of chronic pain. The final chapter is a summary of concise clinical protocols for several common clinical presentations, including back pain, body wall pain, pain in malignant disease, neurogenic pain, head pain, and complex regional pain syndromes. The information presented in the text is sparsely referenced, which readers may find problematic, particularly in the chapter about pain perception in that much of the factual information presented is not supported by references from scientific literature.

This text would appear to be most appropriate for clinical practitioners in the United Kingdom or Europe and potentially somewhat less so for those in the United States with regard to the availability of recommended pharmacologic agents. Although many of the medications recommended are commonly available and used throughout the world, readers in the American population occasionally will be scrambling to find a medication available in the United States that is similar in pharmacologic activity or that is commonly referred to by another

name. Another notable consideration for readers of this book is the bias toward primarily noninvasive multidisciplinary management. Little information is provided regarding the appropriate use of neural blockade procedures and other more-invasive pain management techniques, including spinal cord stimulation, and implanted drug administration systems largely are ignored. Readers seeking information about the application of invasive management approaches largely will have to seek this readily available information from other sources.

In the context of a concise, introductory textbook reviewing the multidisciplinary management of common chronic pain syndromes from the perspective of two notable clinicians in the United Kingdom, this book serves as an interesting and easily accessible resource. Although not intended as a comprehensive textbook about pain management, the authors provided a concise and practical introduction to the clinical management of common chronic pain syndromes.

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Manual of Drug Interactions for Anesthesiology. By Robert A. Mueller and Dag B. A. Lundberg, Churchill Livingstone, 1996. Pages: 503. Price: \$39.95.

This is the third edition of this reference book and seems to have been written mainly for anesthesiologists unfamiliar with drugs used in other specialties. The authors have not included commonly used anesthetic drugs, such as the muscle relaxants and the inhalation, intravenous, and local anesthetics.

The book begins with an index in which drugs are listed, not according to page numbers on which the description and interactions appear, but according to the authors' numerical listing. This makes using this index awkward. The lack of a conventional alphabetical index makes the book even more difficult to use because it becomes almost impossible to look up drugs of a particular group such as "MAO Inhibitors." As a result, readers will need to know the actual name of the drug to use this book effectively.

After the index is a section entitled "Philosophy and Theory" in which the authors describe the various mechanisms of drug interactions. Although this information has been provided to avoid repetition, it is rare that one has to refer to this section. Most of the mechanisms of action and side effects of drugs are adequately described in each separate drug heading.

In the section that provides the actual drug interaction information, the drugs are divided into categories. Within each category, the drugs are grouped according to common mechanism of action. Because the drugs are not arranged alphabetically in each category, it is difficult to find a particular drug quickly without using the index, unless one is ready to peruse the entire section. The uses and side effects of each drug are described under each drug heading and then, in more detail, the interactions of the drug with anesthetic agents are described. If a series of drugs has a common mechanism of action and interaction, the authors have only referred to the previous drug in that section to avoid repetition. In cases in which there are no known interactions, or in which interactions have not been well substantiated, the authors have clearly pointed this out. The authors included relevant information and still managed to keep the text brief.

Despite the finding that the book is pocket sized, and thus easy to carry, the print is large enough to be read easily. This reference book is directed primarily at anesthesiologists. Its use by other physicians is limited by the finding that the authors focused only on anesthetic interactions and did not include all drug-drug interactions.

This book is a good reference for those needing to look up interactions involving drugs that are not commonly found in anesthetic practice. The information provided is brief and to the point. The reader can quickly obtain information without having to go through unnecessary detail. However, it is this lack of detail that makes this book good as a reference and but not likely to be a necessary addition to the array of textbooks routinely used by the individual anesthesiologist.

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