

Review of “Short Bowel Syndrome in Childhood” by Michael Höllwarth, published by Morgan & Claypool Life Sciences (eBook) www.morganclaypool.com

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Published online: 21 April 2015
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Short bowel syndrome (SBS) remains a significant disease process for pediatric surgeons. As such, the book on this topic by Michael Höllwarth is both timely and important. While most books are quite lengthy and have in-depth chapters on adaptation and physiologic principals, this book is actually quite unique. Dr. Höllwarth’s book is quite succinct (just under 100 pages), yet covers a wide range of topics from physiology, gut adaptation to medical and surgical management. Thus, the book might be an excellent compendium to residents, nutritionists or other medical professionals who need a quick primer on this very challenging subject. I particularly liked the chapters on the complications of SBS, including bacterial overgrowth. As well, there is a very nice section which makes recommendations on the laboratory values which need close monitoring. These are key areas which require careful management and long-term follow-up in SBS patients.

Due to the book’s length, there are some limitations to be noted. First, the placement of GLP-2 treatment under “Conservative Therapy for SBS Humans” might be a bit of a misstatement. While the drug was just approved for adults last year, it is still under investigation for the use in children. Thus, its use should be viewed as experimental in childhood. As well, the book has a very limited reference to the use and outcomes of intestinal transplantation. While this latter therapy has been on the decline due to improved clinical outcomes, it still is a key element in the overall care of children with SBS.

As the lives of children with SBS are improving and children are gaining greater life expectancies, books such as the one by Michael Höllwarth will have a key role in the education of many healthcare workers who will eventually encounter these highly complex children.

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