Book Reviews

Raised intracranial pressure: A Clinical Guide

Brian North and Peter Reilly. Heinemann Medical Books, Oxford, 1990. pp. 109. \$55.00 U.S. ISBN # 0-433-00102-X

In this monograph the authors have summarized the information necessary for a basic understanding of the pathophysiology of intracranial hypertension, the measurement techniques involved and the clinical applications of ICP control. The book is organized into ten chapters which cover anatomy, physiology, pathology, clinical and radiological signs of intracranial hypertension, measurement and interpretation of ICP recordings, as well as clinical implications and the control of intracranial pressure. The text is clearly written and easy to read. The graphs, brain images and illustrations are very well done and enhance the text considerably. The 100 references (1902–1989) which support the text represent a conventional view of intracranial dynamics, as is appropriate for an introductory text. It is somewhat disappointing that concepts such as intracranial pressure gradients and herniation, cerebral effects of resuscitation with hypertonic saline, and the controversy surrounding the benefits of long-term management of intracranial hypertension are not addressed.

This book provides a very well illustrated introduction to intracranial pressure, its pathophysiology, measurement and control for those in contact with neurological patients. It is a welcome addition to anaesthesia departmental libraries.

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Anaesthesia and intensive care practical procedures

Neil Soni. Heinemann Professional Publishing Ltd., Oxford, 1989. pp. 225. \$80.00 U.S. ISBN 0-433-00062-7

The practice of anaesthesia and critical care are each associated with a substantial number of invasive procedures which are fraught with substantial risk of major complications if performed incorrectly. The learning of these clinical invasive procedures is in general the result of the apprenticeship approach to medical education, with lack of objective description of the goals and the techniques for the performing of a given procedure. This work

by Soni is a worthwhile compendium of descriptions of the techniques related to intravascular access, thoracic procedures, abdominal procedures, airway procedures, regional block technique, intracranial pressure monitoring, and also has appendices dealing with resuscitation, a number of routine values, discussions regarding equipment, and the use of the APACHE II scoring system, and finally the description of a declotting procedure for dialysis shunts. Whereas not every procedure in this manual will be used by every practitioner of anaesthesia or of critical care, many will be utilized by any individuals involved in anaesthesia or critical care management. This book is written by a single author and therefore has the benefits of cohesive style. There are many good drawings and photographs to illustrate salient points relating to anatomy or technique. The style is concise and to the point. Each chapter ends with a list of references for further reading. With the exception of the comment on page 45, that "most authorities agree that three days is the maximum time a catheter should be left *in situ*," in the section dealing with pulmonary artery catheters, I found very little in the text with which I did not agree.

In summary, this is a practical review of the indications, contraindications, techniques, and complications of a wide variety of invasive procedures some of which may be performed by anaesthetists or critical care physicians only rarely in emergency situations. Review by established practitioners and by anaesthesia and critical care residents would be a time well spent. This book makes an appropriate addition to hospital anaesthesia and critical care libraries regardless of whether or not they have training programmes.

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