Book Reviews

Anaesthesia for Medical Students

Patrick Sullivan (Ed.). Department of Anaesthesia, Ottawa Civic Hospital 1995. 266 pages. ISBN: 0-9699801-0-8

It is a pleasure to review this spiral-bound, easy-to-read, and well illustrated handbook. It is one of the very few that is truly written for medical students, no doubt by authors who are actively engaged in undergraduate teaching.

The book, with 24 short chapters, begins with clearly defined objectives for medical students during their anaesthesia rotation. The materials are covered in the following topics: preoperative assessment and preparation, practical approach to the OR, airway anatomy and management, monitoring, pharmacology, acute and chronic pain management, obstetrical anaesthesia, neonatal resuscitation, fluid and blood therapy, common and unusual problems, managing the circulation, and oxygen therapy. All chapters are well written. Two areas, in particular, are superb: (1) preoperative evaluation and risk assessment, and (2) airway assessment and management.

The approach is logical, clear, concise, practical, and appropriate to the intended readers. There are no elaborate discussions or cook-book type details, as seen in some other books intended for medical students. Case histories and discussion of common perioperative problems are fine examples of problem-orientated teaching.

As programme director of undergraduate education in anaesthesia, I highly recommend this book to all medical students.

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Quality in Health Care: Theory, Application, and Evolution

Nancy O. Graham (Ed.). Aspen Publishers, Inc. 1995. 358 pages. ISBN: 0-8342-0625-0

Nancy Graham edited a popular reference entitled *Quality Assurance in Hospitals*, which was first published in 1982 and again in 1990. Unfortunately, the second edition did not anticipate the rapidity of change in quality assurance in the 1990s and soon became dated. Rather than publishing a third edition, Dr. Graham has produced a new work which takes a broadly based look at the issues affecting quality in health care. While the previous work consisted of a number of submitted chapters, the current book is a compilation of reprints from the health administration and medical literature. The authors are well chosen, including such leaders in the quality movement as Avedis Donabedian, Donald Berwick, and Peter Senge. Sources include journals such as *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *Healthcare Forum Journal*, and *Quality Review Bulletin*, and numerous monographs. There are 21 chapters divided into three sections: yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Five chapters deal with issues of the past, including two complementary histories of quality assurance, and seminal articles by D.M. Berwick and J.E. Wennberg. Fourteen of the chapters deal with current issues, including total quality management, critical paths, clinical practice guidelines, benchmarking, information technology, and changing physicians' practice. The future is conservatively covered in two chapters.

This is an interesting book. Many issues are reviewed by the leading experts. Despite being a compilation, there is little overlap between chapters and they are generally stylistically compatible. The articles are well chosen and do meet the editor's objective to provide an overview of quality in health care. However, there are two noticeable disadvantages to the book. First, the articles and references included with them cannot be absolutely current. Second, the articles can only give an introduction to many of the topics. This leaves the reader anxious for more information. Nevertheless, the book is a well designed work and is a handy reference for those working in quality assurance. The collection of articles would also be useful for residents wanting a compact review of this expanding field. It would be an appropriate addition to any departmental library.

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Blood: Hemostasis, Transfusion, and Alternatives in the Perioperative Period

Carol L. Lake, Roger A. Moore (Eds.). Raven Press, 1995. 566 pages. \$129.00 (US). ISBN: 0-7817-0267-4

There is no shortage of readily available information in the areas of knowledge covered by this multi-authored text book, edited by two respected American anesthesiologists. Given this availability of information in a variety of sources, both anaesthesia-specific and general, it is reasonable to ask whether this text provides new information to the literature and/or provides a current and complete collection of authoritative summary information which may be of interest to the reader because of its assembly in one location. This text book does not provide information unavailable elsewhere. However it does provide some useful focused summaries of up to date information on a wide range of subjects, falling within the title of the text.

The text is divided into five sections: Hemostatic mechanisms; Clinical evaluation of patients with haemostatic dysfunction; Transfusion therapy; Alternative to transfusion therapy; Special concerns. As is the case, unfortunately, with many multi-authored texts, this text has a very uneven series of chapters. This unevenness arises from both the basic nature of individual chapter contents (brief and cursory with few supporting references to long and comprehensive with a very extensive reference list). There is also an unevenness in the authority of the information contained. The reader's confidence is weakened by some of the more cursory chapters, but overall, confidence is restored because of the excellent chapters.

Particularly noteworthy chapters include: Clinical Coagulation; Laboratory Evaluation of Hemostasis in the Perioperative Period; Principles of Transfusion Medicine; Hemodilution: Physiology and Limits of Anemia; Pharmacologic Manipulation of Hemostasis: Anticoagulation; and Perioperative Coagulopathy, Cardiac Surgery.

In summary, a focus on the authoritative and complete chapters in this text leads to the view it is a useful current summary of perioperative issues related to blood, blood products and alternative therapy. It should be available in Departmental

Libraries and will likely be of special interest to those practitioners working in Tertiary Care Centres.

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Back Pain in the Workplace

Wilbert E. Fordyce (Ed.). IASP Press 1995. 75 pages.

\$25.00 US. ISBN: 0-931092-11-6

The Committee on back pain in the workplace was struck when Dr. Michael Cousins was the President of the International Association for the Study of Pain. The Committee, chaired by Dr. W. Fordyce, was a diverse collection of physicians and other health professionals interested in this problem. The 75-page report they have produced is very timely and will prove to be a source of much information and indeed, inspiration, for anybody working in the field of chronic pain, especially low back pain and pain in the workplace. The Committee focused specifically on non-specific back pain, which they estimate constitutes about 85% of all back pain.

The report addresses back pain in the broadest sense of the term, and includes the emotional, psychological and social components and, as well, pays clear attention to the economic consequences of this problem. This chapter provides information which will be useful to determine health care priorities, and should be of value to pain centres, presenting the importance of their place within the health care setting. A paragraph on "What is pain?" sets up the rest of the discussion to consider pain in its broadest possible sense. The epidemiology of the subject is discussed in adequate detail and a more precise discussion of what impairment and disability mean is very helpful, although occasionally plagued with rather soft generalizations. Prevention is addressed, and there is a detailed protocol, demonstrating one approach to early management of non-specific low back pain. A separate chapter discusses changes in the medical system which might facilitate prevention and treatment, and there is a brief chapter on management of long-term disability, which gives some guidelines but no detailed suggestions.

There is some vagueness in some of the statements, inevitable in a multi-authored production, but the editor has done, overall, an excellent job in producing a very readable and informative publication. I can recommend this book to any department, or individual, interested in treatment of chronic pain.

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Oxygénation tissulaire

sous la direction de C. Richard, J.-L. Teboul. Masson 1995.

272 pages. 280 F. ISBN 2-225-84713-4.

Dans cette collection chapeautée par deux des plus grands noms de l'anesthésie et de la réanimation françaises, soit Jean-Marie DesMonts et François Lemaire, vient de s'ajouter un volume portant sur un des sujets les plus pointus de la réanimation, celui de la relation entre la quantité d'oxygène utilisée par la cellule et celle qui lui est délivrée.

Cette monographie de toute évidence s'adresse à tous les résidents en formation et les cliniciens qui tentent de faire le point sur ce sujet. On commence par rappeler les principes de base du métabolisme cellulaire, du transport de l'oxygène et du débit cardiaque pour terminer dans une première partie par une excellente synthèse du problème en question.

Suit un chapitre traitant exclusivement des mesures actuelles permettant l'évaluation de l'oxygénation des tissus. Suivent trois chapitres traitant des effets des trois thérapies impliquées dans la perfusion périphérique soit le remplissage vasculaire, les médicaments vasoactifs et les sédatifs. Dans une dernière partie, on tente de faire une synthèse des notions accumulées au cours des quatre plus grands syndromes rencontrés en réanimation, soit les chocs septique, cardiogénique et hypovolémique ainsi que le syndrome de détresse respiratoire de l'adulte.

Ce volume demeure fidèle à la philosophie des autres volumes de la collection. On a favorisé des textes très longs. Cette longueur entraîne évidemment une certaine dilution des messages et de nombreuses répétitions. Cependant, les problèmes et les faits restent bien exposés et bien expliqués. Les bibliographies de chaque chapitre sont extensives. Parmi les rares volumes traitant de ce sujet, celui-ci représente une excellente ressource pour celui qui veut se mettre à jour sur le sujet.

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États infectieux graves. Perspectives thérapeutiques

sous la direction de J. Carlet, C.I. Martin, G. Offenstadt.

Masson 1995. 248 pages. 290 F. ISBN 2-225-84677-4.

Est-ce que les états infectieux graves, la translocation microbienne et la défaillance multiviscérale vous passionnent? Est-ce que les cytokines, le TNF et les endotoxines vous rebutent? Quelles sont les perspectives thérapeutiques attribuables à l'usage des corticoïdes et aux stratégies anti-TNF et anti-IL-1 dans les états infectieux graves? Voici quelques-uns des éléments que tente d'apprivoiser cette mise à jour.

Cet ouvrage de la collection d'anesthésiologie et de réanimation regroupe 32 collaborateurs français et 2 belges. Les champs abordés à l'intérieur de chacun des 14 chapitres sont bien définis et de fait limite les redondances habituellement associées à ce genre de collectif. Le tout est agréablement rendu, de façon claire et concise, ce qui est digne de mention compte tenu de l'aridité prêtée à ce sujet. Les chapitres sont adéquatement référencés incluant autant les articles de base que les parutions récentes (1994).

Cet ouvrage peut se diviser en trois volets. Le premier aborde les définitions, l'épidémiologie et le pronostic des états infectieux graves. Le deuxième volet en constitue le corps principal. Il reprend le rôle physiopathologique ainsi que les avenues thérapeutiques disponibles et en investigation dans le domaine des endotoxines, des cytokines et des corticoïdes. Finalement le regard jeté sur les perturbations de l'hémostase et de la macro- et microcirculation, la contribution de la translocation bactérienne, l'implication des médiateurs lipidiques, des protéases et des radicaux libres permet vraiment de concevoir les états infectieux graves comme un tableau dynamique au cours duquel se développe des fenêtres de lancement thérapeutiques. En terme de mise en garde, le style télégraphique et le grand nombre d'abréviations de certains passages pourront rendre le propos hermétique au lecteur dépourvu de notions de base.

En résumé, j'ai grandement apprécié la diversité des aspects abordés ainsi que le caractère clair, précis et pertinent des chapitres. Il s'agit d'une excellente mise à jour pouvant s'adresser à tout praticien désireux faire le point et alimenter ses réflexions sur le sujet.

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