Book Reviews

Drug Interactions in Anesthesia (Second Edition)
N.T. Smith, A.N. Corbascio (Eds). Lea & Febiger,
Philadelphia, 1986, ISBN 0-8121-0998-8

Given the polypharmacy which anaesthetists deal with daily, a new edition of a text exploring drug interactions and anaesthesia is welcome. Smith and Corbascio have updated and expanded the first edition of "Drug Interactions in Anaesthesia" and added new contributors and new chapters, for example, calcium-channel blockers and inorganic cations. The sections cover a wide spectrum ranging from mechanisms: general principles, pharmacokinetics and drug interactions, and the role of the liver, to those pertaining to specific classes of drugs such as beta-blockers, cholinergics and anticholinergics. The text is encyclopaedic and although coverage cannot include every new drug and possible interaction, pharmacologic principles are presented well, which should enable the reader to predict interactions and determine the consequences. Chapters include good case reports which demonstrate vividly various drug interactions. There is some overlap and repetition in certain areas, with topics such as potassium handled in both the cation and the diuretic sections. However, repetition does serve to reinforce important points. Some recent advances, such as digoxin antibody fragments for digoxin toxicity were absent in the digitalis chapter and the availability of transdermal clonidine for use perioperatively was not mentioned. This is an educational in-depth book and not merely a "cookbook" listing. It should be read by staff and residents and kept available near the operating room, for easy reference.

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Anesthesia for Obstetrics (Second Edition)
S.M. Shnider, G. Levinson (Eds). Williams & Wilkins,
Baltimore, 1987. ISBN 0-683-07750-3.

The first edition of this book has been widely accepted and used as a reference text for obstetric anaesthesia. This new edition has been improved with 13 new chapters and revisions to the remaining chapters. New topics

include intraspinal opiates in obstetrics, anaesthetic management for postpartum sterilization surgery, fetal surgery, amniotic fluid embolism, maternal mortality, and anaesthesia for pregnant patients with coexisting medical disorders.

Those who provide anaesthesia to pregnant patients will appreciate the great wealth of physiologic and pharmacologic data as well as clearly stated clinical practice information provided by experienced obstetric anaesthetists. The explicit recommendations and explanations for clinical procedures along with full discussions of literature will be useful for the residents in training.

The large number of contributors and chapters lead to some repetition and fragmentation of information. Discussions on "hypotension and regional anesthesia" can be found in three different chapters. Some chapters may have been prepared too long ago. The latest reference in "Anesthesia for the Pregnant Patient with Immunologic Disease" is 1983. The acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) is not mentioned. The index has some errors. The pages for hypertensive disorders are incorrect.

Overall, the abundance of useful clinical information far outweighs the deficiencies. I recommend this book for all who provide anaesthesia to pregnant patients.

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Anaphylactic Reactions in Anesthesia and Intensive Care

J.H. Levy. Butterworth, Stoneham, MA
ISBN 0-409-95193-5 \$22.95 (US)

This well-written book provides the reader with a clear understanding of different aspects of anaphylactic drug reactions in anaesthesia and intensive care. The first section of the book deals with the pathogenesis and the clinical manifestations of anaphylaxis and the subsequent chapters have been devoted to the diagnosis, treatment and the prevention of anaphylactic drug reactions. The book opens with a clear, precise and easy-to-follow account of the immunological basis of anaphylaxis and smoothly flows into a detailed account of the clinical manifestations of an anaphylactic drug reaction. The

nature and the physiologic and pharmacologic roles of the chemical mediators released during a drug reaction have been described with clarity. Likewise drug reactions involving the complement cascade, blood coagulation and fibrinolytic systems, along with kinin-generating sequences, have been succinctly discussed. This section of the book is particularly educational for a reader who may not have adequate familiarity with the different concepts in basic immunology.

The second part of the book describes various anaesthetic and non-anaesthetic agents that may cause anaphylactic or anaphylactoid reactions. This section is useful to the practising clinical anaesthetist since it sheds much light on the incidence of cross-sensitivity and the factors that may predispose these agents to cause anaphylaxis. The reader is further provided with a systematic approach to both clinical and laboratory diagnosis of anaphylactic reactions. The pharmacology of the drugs essential for immediate and subsequent management of an allergic drug reaction is discussed briefly. The already well-established principles of cardio-respiratory support have been reinforced in the section on management. Case reports illustrating the physiological consequences of anaphylaxis make for interesting reading. Finally, a brief chapter is devoted to preventive measures, and a comprehensive bibliography should suffice for the inquisitive reader.

This book is clearly written, easy to understand, imparts up-to-date knowledge on the subject of allergic drug reactions in anaesthesia and should be of use to both practising clinicians and students of anaesthesia alike.

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Book Notes

A Classified Bibliography of Controlled Trials in Perinatal Medicine 1940-1984. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK, ISBN 0-19-261566-1. (Oxford University Press, Don Mills, Ontario) \$68.75

This hard-covered publication of 414 pages lists the authors, article titles and journal citations (journal title, year, volume, pages) of 2770 articles reporting controlled trials in perinatal medicine published since 1940. Preceding the listing of published references is an extensive "Classified Section" which categorizes the data base into a large number of sub-divisions. Within the classified section the numerical identifier of each reference in the subsequent listing is used to indicate the references falling within each category.

Cardiotonic Drugs. A Clinical Survey (Basic and Clinical Cardiology Series, Volume 7). C.V. Leier (Ed). Marcel Dekker, New York, 1986 (Collier Macmillan Canada, Toronto) ISBN 0-8247-7611-9 \$69.75 (US)

This 312-page monograph emphasizes clinical studies and what they reveal about the role of cardiotonic drugs in a range of human disease states, particularly congestive heart failure. In addition, the book discusses animal studies, utilizing these reports to present data on mechanisms of action, metabolism, drug disposition, and other areas not available or well-defined in humans.

Canadian Drug Identification Code, 13th Edition. Health Protection Branch, Health and Welfare Canada. ISBN 0-660-53372-3. Canadian Government Publishing Centre, Ottawa (Cat. No. H42-1-1-1986). \$16.95 (Canada). \$20.35 (Outside Canada).

This publication presents data on the composition (name and strength of each active ingredient), and sources (generic and/or brand names, manufacturers), of more than 16,000 drug products offered for sale in Canada during 1986.