Book & New Media Reviews

Pain and Headache, vol. 14. Botulinum Toxin in Painful Diseases

Wolfgang H. Jost (Ed.). Karger Inc., 2003. 174 pages. \$128.50 (EUR), \$156.50 (USD). ISBN 3-8055-7500-9

The cosmetic use of botulinum toxin A under its trade name BOTOX has become a staple of the entertainment pages and late night comedians. Botulism toxin is however widely used and accepted in the treatment of spasticity and dystonias and is increasingly being used mostly in an individual fashion in the treatment of pain and headache. This volume in the Pain and Headache series edited by W.H. Jost could therefore be a useful reference for those of us who are treating or contemplating treating patients with botulinum toxin.

The book opens with a detailed chapter on the pharmacology of botulism toxins. This is quite detailed and contains just about all the clinician would ever want to know. This chapter is followed up by a chapter on the mechanisms of action in pain management.

There is a chapter on myofascial pain syndrome (MFPS). This chapter is again quite detailed and has a lot of information on the pathophysiology of myofascial pain syndrome. It is certainly worth reading by anybody with an interest in MFPS even if not using botulism toxin. The chapter also reviews eight studies up to 2001 on the use of botulism toxin in the treatment of MFPS.

There are further chapters on facial pain, dystonias, the various headaches, low back pain and on spasticity. They all review the pathophysiology of these conditions as well as the available therapies. The text is complemented with easy to understand tables, diagrams and photographs. Each chapter has an extensive referenced bibliography. As expected with a multi-authored book, there is some repetition but this is not excessive.

The only fault I can find with the book is the use of German drug names which are different - or not available - in North America. This is a minor flaw.

This book will not interest the entire anesthetic community but should be reviewed by anyone who is using botulism toxin. As I mentioned the chapter(s) on myofascial pain syndrome are by themselves wor-

thy of review. This small book would be an excellent addition to the library of a chronic pain anesthesiologist or pain clinic.

Brian Knight MD FRCPC
Edmonton, Alberta

Progress in Pain Research and Management Volume 25. Opioids and Pain Relief: A Historical Perspective

Marcia L. Meldrum (Ed.). IASP Secretariat, 2003. 223 pages. ISBN 0-931092-47-7

This book will appeal to all health care providers who have an interest in the historical development of opioids and opioid receptors, along with issues around the use and abuse of opioids and the clinicians and researchers who have been instrumental in these developments.

John Loeser, a world renowned pain clinician, highlights the thrust of this book when he writes "the editor has called upon historians, philosophers, and care providers to discuss issues relating to the administration of opiates by those given the awesome responsibility of treating pain and suffering."

The chapter by Acker on the dilemmas of regulating analgesics is particularly interesting and provides a thorough discourse on the recent misuse of Oxycontin and places it within the context of prior misuse of medications. Further chapters by Clark, Faull and Nicholson, Swerdlow and Dahl provide valuable insight into the development of cancer pain management and the difficulties early pioneers of opioid use faced.

The personal effect of pain on quality of life and quality of death is wonderfully captured in patient narratives and clinicians' comments in the chapter by Coyle.

This book is worth reading by anyone who is interested in a historical perspective of opioids and pain relief and provides many insights into how we should all provide care to patients with pain.

A. John Clark MD FRCPC
Halifax, Nova Scotia

Practical Perioperative Transoesophageal Echocardiography

David Sidebotham, Alan Merry, Malcolm Legget
(Eds.). Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003. 266 pages.
\$122.00 CDN. ISBN 0 7506 5496 1

This is a multi-authored book with contributions from anesthesiologists, cardiologists, intensivists as well as an ultrasound engineer. This textbook is a concise review of issues commonly encountered in the intensive care unit or in the operating room. Filled with diagrams and tables for rapid consultation, it is small enough to be carried around. The authors have made particular efforts to point out the pitfalls and limitations commonly encountered in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography. They have also made considerable efforts to cover the syllabus of the National Board of Echocardiography examination in perioperative transesophageal echocardiography and used standard nomenclature. I, therefore, honestly believe this book is an excellent base to prepare for the National Board of Echocardiography certification. The second part to this book is a CD-ROM filled with very good and practical video loops. The number of examples is extensive and follows the same format as the book. The other very interesting feature is that the video loops can be incorporated into an electronic presentation for teaching purposes.

In summary, this is an excellent text, which I highly recommend. It has numerous important details, is very well illustrated and extremely pleasant to read. Combined with the video examples found on the CD-ROM, this textbook is more than enough for level 1 training and will take you well into level 2 training.

Jean-Francois Courval MD FRCP(C)
Montreal, Quebec