Book Reviews

Crisis Management in Anesthesiology

David M. Gaba, Kevin J. Fish, Steven K. Howard.

Churchill Livingstone, Inc. 1994. 294 pages.

ISBN: 0-443-08910-8.

Knowledge of approaches to dealing with the patient in crisis form a key element in resident performance evaluation as well as in providing safe anaesthesia care. The authors comprehensively catalogue the information needed for becoming an effective crisis manager in the operating room. The book has already served me well when I just happened to be carrying it with me while on call caring for a severely hyponatremic patient.

This book is no mere compilation of potentially useful data, but is a 300 page catalogue of 83 "critical events" with a brief structured discussion usually running two to four pages in length. Each chapter deals with a topic under the following categories: definition; aetiology; typical situations; prevention; manifestations; similar events; management; complications; suggested readings. Sample topics include hypertension, operating room fires, bronchospasm, oliguria, seizures, hypoxaemia, supraventricular arrhythmias, ventilator failure and laryngospasm.

This book is destined to become the definitive classic in its field, for reasons of approach, clarity and comprehensiveness. The highly structured nature of this work may make it ideal for use in future hypertext "Electronic Handbooks" that are now being published on the Internet.

Every anaesthesia department library and every serious anaesthetist should have this book. It should also be in the bottom drawer of every anaesthesia machine to serve as a ready crisis reference.

D. John Doyle MD PhD FRCPC

Toronto, Ontario.

Anaesthesia and Intensive Care for the Neurosurgical Patient, 2nd ed.

Frank J.M. Walters, G. Stuart Ingram, Jim L. Jenkinson (Eds.). Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1994.

467 pages. \$168.75 (Cdn). ISBN: 0-632-03715-6.

This textbook provides an overview of British neuro-anaesthesia practice. Chapters cover everything from basic neuroanatomy and physiology to anaesthesia for epilepsy and stereotactic surgery and anaesthesia in the

neurosurgical management of chronic pain. As this book is geared to the UK audience, management of patients may differ from that which is customary in North America (e.g., use and type of premedication given to patients undergoing supratentorial tumour surgery). I found the book encyclopaedic in topics covered, but that there was usually little "meat" associated with any topic. For instance, there was no discussion of the landmark NASCET or ECST studies confirming an advantage of carotid endarterectomy over medical therapy for patients with severe carotid stenosis in the chapter on "Anaesthesia for vascular surgery." The most current references are to 1991 and most are much older. In my view, by far the best chapter was the one entitled "Anaesthesia for spinal surgery" by Ian Calder. Controversies such as intubation of the unstable C-spine were tackled head on and dealt with in an unbiased manner. Good discussions of fiberoptic intubation (accompanied by excellent colour photographs) are included. This chapter alone makes the book worthwhile. Otherwise, this text provides North American anaesthesia staff or residents, interested in neuroanaesthesia, little additional information that is not currently available. This is a worthwhile book for departmental libraries to consider but less so for individuals unless there is a strong interest in this subspecialty area.

W.A.C. Mutch MD

Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Hyperthermies Malignes

Malignant Hyperthermias

Fr: *M. Aubert, J. Borsarelli, G. Kozack Ribbens (Eds.).*

Eng: *M. Aubert, J. Borsarelli, H.J. Khambatta, G. Kozack Ribbens (Eds.).* (English revision: A. Wald).

Normed Verlag, Bad Homburg 1994. Pages: 239 (Fr);

215 (Eng). \$38.00 (US). ISBN Fr: 3-89199-040-5;

Eng: 3-89199-041-3.

This small multi-authored text presents many contributions that reflect the proceedings of the First International Workshop on Malignant Hyperthermias held in Marseilles in January 1992.

The title "Malignant Hyperthermias" is thought-provoking as it implies that there is more than one type of hyperthermia. In fact, the major thrust of this book is to link exertional heat stroke (EHS), which is triggered

by intensive physical effort, with the better known but clinically heterogeneous syndrome malignant hyperthermia (MH) which is triggered by anaesthetic agents. This prescient concept of a link between EHS and MH raises important debatable interpretations. At present, it is not possible to ascertain whether the positive *in vitro* contracture test reported here in EHS patients corresponds with the same molecular abnormality responsible for MH, especially since the genetic pattern of the latter is undetermined.

Multidisciplinary authors have contributed 27 papers. These provide an overview of the mode of presentation, pathophysiology, treatment, prevention, and European protocol for diagnosis of MH and EHS, as well as a survey of their association with muscle abnormalities. The papers are well-referenced. The discussions of the pathophysiology and therapy of MH, as well as the use of P-31 nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy on human muscle in a clinical setting for research and diagnostic purposes, are excellent.

In the latter part of the book, experiences, research and diagnostic activities of various French and other European centres are presented. The review of the integrated multidisciplinary research and diagnostic unit of Marseilles is particularly instructive. It is impressive to note that the complete evaluation of a patient can be accomplished within 24 hours!

The addendum that contains the addresses of the currently existing MH diagnostic and research laboratories, various MH associations, charts for treatment of MH, as well as the insert on dantrolene should be useful to practitioners wishing to refer their patients for investigation and rapid referral for treatment. Although on the whole the book translates well from French into English and the clearly set-out text is easy to read, there are occasional misspellings and omissions which may be misleading. In summary, this latest treatise available both in English and French will be welcome reading for individuals seeking basic information on the topics that are covered, as well as specialists in the management of patients with MH and exercise hyperthermia.

Leena R. Patel MD FRCPC
Winnipeg, Manitoba.