Recognizing child abuse in radiology (1st edn), by Alan E. Oestreich and Marguerite M. Caré

Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg, 2017. Hardcover 97 pp, 95 illustrations, English, ISBN-13: 978-3319443225 (hardcover), ISBN-10: 3319443224 (e-book), US \$79.99 hardcover/\$59.99 e-book

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Received: 18 October 2017 / Accepted: 16 November 2017 / Published online: 19 December 2017
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Drs. Oestreich and Caré have written a fine introduction to radiology's role in the diagnosis and evaluation of child abuse. As readers of *Pediatric Radiology* know well, the topic of child abuse is both broad and deep. Unexplained injury and vulnerable children deserve close scrutiny, but the diagnosis of child abuse is beyond the radiology record, and where and when radiology fits in the process of diagnosis is complex. What is clear is the need to approach the interpretation of studies as well-informed and objective physicians. Having a variety of high-quality references to help solve complicated questions is essential to providing objective and clear interpretations.

Type of book In that vein Drs. Oestreich and Caré have produced a dense but short primer on the topic of child abuse. It is richly illustrated and well referenced. The book is aimed at the general pediatrician and radiologist but, despite its brevity, it packs in educational pearls and clear teaching for radiologists at every level.

Contents Both authors have extensive experience as pediatric radiologists and teachers and this is highlighted by the clear text. Dr. Oestreich is well known among members of the Society for Pediatric Radiology for his insight on all topics of pediatric radiology and, in particular, bone radiology. Dr. Caré, a pediatric neuroradiologist and an expert on child abuse, adds keen insight into the important and complex topic of brain injury in abused children.

The book is very successful in addressing topics of difficulty in child abuse, including radiographic findings that may mimic abuse, as well as rickets and the straw man issues raised in child abuse.

Strengths “What about chronic subdural collections?” begins a particularly helpful paragraph in the neuroradiology section of the book. It is this type of practical and concise discourse that qualifies this book as an essential text for any radiology department. I would be very remiss not to highlight the value of chapter 2, in which normal skeletal findings are carefully explained, and chapter 4, in which metabolic bone disease and alternative reasons for fractures are described. In general the images are very well reproduced and illustrative of the text.

Weaknesses Less successful areas of the book are the short sections that authors attempt to tackle with little good evidence and sparse references. It is not surprising that the short chapter on abuse deniers and siblings is not as helpful. The text nicely makes the point that zealous deniers exist but aside from providing a reference in response to the argument, it does little to add to the discussion. Similarly, the chapter on the thorax, abdomen and soft tissues is light on substance, probably because these are areas of little concrete and specific research in child abuse imaging. Injuries to the pancreas are by definition suspicious for abuse, but the resulting radiology is not typically specific for child abuse. This is unlike classic metaphyseal lesions, which have been very carefully investigated in a number of highly scientific articles and have proved to be highly specific for abusive injury.

Recommendation This book would be a fine addition to any department's library and would prove a valuable investment of a few of hours of reading. It would be particularly helpful in preparing a radiologist who may be asked to provide testimony in a child abuse court case.

Overall grade Very good.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflicts of interest None

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