Peter Harper: Myotonic dystrophy

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This is a book written with the myotonic dystrophy patient and their family in mind. Professor Harper is a world renowned authority on myotonic dystrophy and has published extensively in this field including the publication of a comprehensive textbook on myotonic dystrophy.

This short yet comprehensive guide to myotonic dystrophy gives the reader practical information on the condition right from its historical perspectives to current management strategies and future direction of research in the field.

Though the book is primarily aimed at patients and their families, there is plenty of valuable information even for the health professionals. The book answers some of the common questions posed by patients and families. These have been clearly highlighted in tabulated format as key points at the beginning of each section and interspersed are frequently asked questions (FAQs). It equips the patients and their families with easily assimilable information, helping them understand their problems better, in particular all

the questions that suddenly plague a newly diagnosed patient. This book also empowers them to ask relevant questions of their treating physicians.

The chapter on family aspects and genetic risks provides detailed information on inheritance pattern, recurrence risk and risk to the extended family; all very common questions that arise in a newly diagnosed patient. The complexity of the genetics has been very well simplified further in the chapter on advances in research. The genetic “jargon” has been simplified to a level that a person without much medical knowledge at all would easily understand. There are practical points on management, in particular, the appendix on anaesthetic considerations is extremely useful.

This book is a “must have” for myotonic dystrophy patients and their families. I would also thoroughly recommend it to healthcare professionals involved in caring for patients and families with myotonic dystrophy.

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