Obstetric Anesthesia—Pocket Clinician

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“Obstetric Anesthesia—Pocket Clinician” is an obstetrical anesthesia handbook written by anesthesia residents and fellows of Harvard Medical School and edited by faculty members. This is a practical reference guide for medical students, residents, and anesthesiologists who need rapid access to topical information when dealing with obstetrical patients. The handbook may be especially useful for clinicians who are less familiar with high-risk obstetrical anesthesia practice. As the editors describe in the preface, the pocketbook should be considered a practical reference guide for practitioners working on the labour floor.

The book is comprised of two parts. Part 1, *Obstetric Anesthesia*, includes a variety of topics presented in alphabetical order that are related to the anesthetic management of the parturient. The content addresses the fundamental aspects pertaining to the more common co-existing diseases relevant to the parturient and presents the obstetrical and anesthetic management of different forms of delivery. The most frequent anesthetic complications and their management are also addressed. While the essential information is presented, different aspects of related diseases, their diagnoses, and their clinical management are presented in a manner which occasionally makes it difficult for the reader to locate a particular topic within the text. A remissive index would have been useful, but it is rather uncommon for manuals or pocketbooks to include that type of indexing.

Given the scope of this book, the chapters are appropriately comprehensive and advocate safe anesthetic practices. Several chapters covering anesthetic techniques are especially thorough, particularly the chapters on epidural analgesia, combined spinal-epidural analgesia, and anesthesia for cesarean delivery. These chapters provide useful guidelines for the relevant technical procedures and provide recommendations on optimal drug dosing and drug delivery options. Each topic is subdivided into the following components: (1) *Fundamental Knowledge*—introduces the theory relating to the subject; (2) *Studies*—describes the relevant physical examination and laboratory investigations; (3) *Management and Interventions*—explains, in detail, the related procedural techniques and therapeutic management; (4) *Caveats and Pearls*—provides useful tips on each topic; and (5) *Checklist*—summarizes important points to keep in mind about each subject.

Part 2 of this tome provides an obstetrical anesthesia formulary that includes various drugs used in the management of the obstetrical patient. The listings are organized alphabetically for rapid access to information.

In summary, the “Obstetric Anesthesia—Pocket Clinician” is a valuable tool for trainees in anesthesia and may prove useful as a quick reference guide on the labour and delivery floor.

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