

References

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Book Review

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P. Buchmann, W. Brühlmann: **Investigation of anorectal functional disorders**. Springer, Berlin Heidelberg New York, 1993. 212 Pages, 130 Figures, 38 Tables. Hardcover, DM 248,00 (ISBN 3-540-55326-6)

The monograph contains 20 different articles by 14 authors. Kamm reports on the physiology and pathophysiology of defaecation. Citing many references, he comes to the conclusion that control of the large bowel and sphincter function are not yet completely understood. Hildebrandt's article on ultrasound anatomy of the pelvic floor confirms our knowledge about this region in the living subject.

The article by Buchmann about clinical examination is very important, but we do not agree that sigmoidoscopy is rarely possible without an enema, since the rectum is empty most of the time. The pages following describe the technique of defaecography, the indications and the value for treatment decisions.

Stuckmann compares conventional radiography with CT and MR. Marti follows with balloon proctography, Erkenbrecht with endoscopy, Kamm with scintigraphy and Kuijpers with transit time measurement. Very interesting and unexpected is the finding that half of the patients complaining of constipation have a normal transit time! After the short article on manometry, electromyography and other functional pelvic floor tests by Kamm follows no. 15, rectal prolapse by Mathieu. Kuijpers provides the surgeon's viewpoint; he believes that denervation of the pelvic floor leads to impaired function from enteroceles up to total rectal prolapse. Rectal outpocketing by Hauck is a very interesting feature, as demonstrated by defaecography, but we doubt the existence of real hernias in holes of the levator muscles; additionally, small enteroceles are not pathological features. The assessment of functional constipation by Kuijpers, defaecography and incontinence by Marti, and anal malformation conclude the monograph.

The reader will find many questions in this book and will receive much incentive to distinguish real diseases from so many harmless deviations. The newest references after each contribution will be particularly helpful.

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