Book Reviews

Paediatric Anaesthesia

Edward Sumner, David J. Hatch (Eds.). Arnold, 1999. 648 pages. £65.00. ISBN 0-340-71942-7

This is the second and radically revised edition of this book. It is intended to provide a readily accessible and readable source of information for general anesthesiologists and trainees and at the same time to be a useful reference book for specialist pediatric anesthesiologists. The latter aim has not been fully achieved as certain specialised areas have been omitted such as transplantation and anesthesia for certain neonatal procedures including gastroschisis, omphalocele, tracheoesophageal fistula and diaphragmatic hernia.

I found the first chapter, "Development and disease in childhood", particularly confusing as basic developmental physiology was mixed with both common and uncommon diseases. More attention could be paid to some of the tables as these were at times difficult to understand and incomplete. The tables of syndromes are divided into those with airway problems, cardiovascular problems etc., rather than listing the syndromes alphabetically which may be more useful if the table is to be used as a quick clinical reference. Cross referencing to tables and further reading was at times inaccurate.

The basic chapters are generally well written, being short and succinct. The chapter, "Immediate postoperative intensive care", is good and an area often omitted in other textbooks. The information given in this book is supported by references to recent articles although this is not so with some of the more controversial statements. In some chapters the content is mainly valuable but unreferenced descriptions of the author's personal clinical approaches. A few areas appear not to have been fully updated such as the section on malignant hyperthermia, and the appendix on extradural analgesia does not include ropivacaine.

While containing some excellent speciality chapters and being much improved from the first edition, the overall content should be more up to date and comprehensive to meet the needs of North American readership. This book should be bought as a supplement to other essential Pediatric Anesthesia references.

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Anesthesiology Clinics of North America, Trauma Vol. 17

Christopher M. Grande, Charles E Smith (Eds.). W.B. Saunders Company, 1999. 333 pages. ISBN 0889-8537

This comprehensive text with contributions from multiple authors offers an organized approach to trauma management. The first half of the book highlights the importance of understanding the epidemiological process involved in trauma, which help guide the clinician in diagnosis and management. Trauma management is very protocol driven and a well-organized algorithm for the management of the hypotensive trauma patient is presented. However, the authors emphasize that not all shock is hemorrhagic and priorities of management should be identified and executed and treatment should not be delayed for diagnosis to be complete but should proceed simultaneously with investigative process.

The section on pre-hospital setting deals with the evolving issues surrounding hypotensive resuscitation. Airway management is well covered and separate chapters deal with laryngeal injury and airway disruption. Useful tips are offered for performing an emergency cricothyroidotomy. Two sections deal with fluid and blood resuscitation as well as alternatives to blood transfusion and cell-saver techniques.

The second half of this text covers the effect of trauma on specific systems. Dangor and Lam offer an excellent review of head and spinal injuries. The chapter on orthopedic injuries highlights the benefit of early fracture fixation on the incidence of ARDS; reference is however made to two exclusive groups, patients with severe pulmonary injuries and those with severe intracranial injuries. Barach, in the chapter on blunt cardiac trauma, points out that this injury results more commonly in right rather than left ventricular dysfunction. There are also chapters dealing with burns, pediatrics, pregnancy and geriatrics offering comprehensive reviews of these topics. This text would not be complete without a section on pain management and here special reference is made to the benefits of regional techniques.

Grande and Smith offer an excellent multidisciplinary overview of trauma and I recommended this issue to all clinicians involved in trauma management.

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