Book Reviews

Vascular Anaesthesia. A Practical Handbook

Lawrence Caldicott, Andrew Lumb, Deirdre McCoy.
Butterworth Heinemann, 1999. 272 pages. \$52.00
(US) ISBN 0-7606-3468-5

This hard cover text book provides an excellent overview of vascular anesthesia. It consists of nine chapters and 263 pages of text, diagrams and tables. It is written by three anesthesiologists working in the field of vascular anesthesia and is an up-to-date reflection of the current scientific literature available on the subject.

Over half of the text is devoted to four chapters consisting of cardiovascular physiology and pathophysiology, the pharmacology of drugs for vascular anesthesia, preoperative assessment of these patients, and monitoring during surgery. Although much of this information is similar to that found in the standard anesthesia text books, these authors have focused on the important issues related to patients with vascular disease. Emphasis is placed on the fact that most vascular patients have co-existing coronary artery disease and other systemic illnesses.

The remaining chapters cover carotid endarterectomy, abdominal aortic surgery, lower limb revascularization, miscellaneous vascular operations, and postoperative care. There is no reference to surgery on the thoracic aorta, or vascular surgery in the pediatric population. The theme throughout this handbook is to provide clinically relevant information, supported by the scientific literature and practical experience. The authors have addressed areas of controversy and suggested practical approaches to complex clinical problems. They reemphasize the multisystem approach to management of these patients.

I recommend this practical handbook to any clinician working in the field of vascular anesthesia. As suggested by the title, it is a practical handbook, but the authors have done a good review of the scientific literature, making this handbook a quick resource for vascular anesthesia.

Frank King MD FRCPC
St. John's, Newfoundland

Pediatric Critical Care. The Essentials

Joseph D. Tobias (Ed.). Futura Publishing Company
Inc., 1999. 465 pages. \$75.00 (US). ISBN 0-87993-428-x

There are three categories of text book; those that are found in a lab coat (torn cover), those in the workplace (well thumbed) and those in the well supported office shelf (rarely opened). This book is designed for the workplace. It offers a comprehensive coverage of all the major pediatric intensive care topics. Although it is a multi-author book, each of the 21 chapters is concise and relevant with appropriate references. The chapters on the respiratory block were above average, but I felt that the congenital heart chapter could be expanded and with greater emphasis on the pathophysiology and treatment of pulmonary hypertension. The other organ blocks are covered well with a good chapter on renal failure and dialysis.

This durable hardcover would be invaluable in any intensive care unit or in the emergency department. For general anesthesiologists, I would recommend this book for all mid-sized to large centres dealing with pediatric patients or processing them for transport to tertiary care centres.

Brian MacManus MD FRCPC
Halifax, Nova Scotia