

# Book & New Media Reviews



## **Anesthesia for Genetic, Metabolic, & Dysmorphic Syndromes of Childhood – Second Edition**

*Victor C. Baum, Jennifer E. O’Flaherty.* Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2007. 415 pages. \$149.00 (US). ISBN-13: 978-0-7817-7938-8; ISBN-10: 0-7817-7938-3

As any anesthesiologist who looks after pediatric patients can attest, trying to get relevant information on any uncommon childhood “syndrome” in a hurry is often an exercise in frustration. Comprehensive yet quickly accessible texts which can help in such a situation are unfortunately very few in number. That is one of the main reasons why the second edition of *Anesthesia for Genetic, Metabolic, & Dysmorphic Syndromes of Childhood* by Drs. Baum and O’Flaherty is such a welcome addition to the anesthesia literature.

The text is arranged in an easily readable manner with the alphabetically listed syndromes identified by distinct headings. The discussions are long enough to be appropriately comprehensive, yet short enough to be easily reviewed. The book is written in such a way as to make the information immediately accessible to any user. Still, a quick review of the one page *Introduction: How to Use This Book* section in the beginning will greatly facilitate efficient use of this text.

A useful three page *Glossary* in the beginning of the book explains many of the commonly used terms which may not be familiar to the average reader. The syndromes are listed alphabetically and their discussion organized in a predictable and easily accessible manner. The most commonly used name of the syndrome is mentioned along with common synonyms. This is followed by a reference number for the syndrome in McKusick’s *Mendelian Inheritance in Man* (“MIM#”). A succinct discussion of the various systemic findings is followed by a comprehensive discussion of the anesthetic implications, with a useful bibliography at the end. The book closes with illustrative appendices of six clinically important metabolic pathways.

The first edition of this book was published in 1999. A few minor criticisms were noted by some reviewers of the first edition. These included a relative paucity of accompanying photographs and a lack of colour photographs. This thoroughly revised and

updated second edition seems to have addressed most of those criticisms. While still not in colour, there are many accompanying photographic illustrations which enhance the text considerably.

The main advantage for this book in comparison to other similar texts is its relative brevity and accessibility. While the content is quite comprehensive for most users, the authors are to be commended for ensuring ease of use and accessibility. For users who might wish to consult a truly exhaustive and definitive text, the authors offer several useful suggestions as well. Although the primary use of this book will be in the care of children, as Drs. Baum and O’Flaherty note in the preface to the book that it includes relevant discussions of these syndromes in adults as well.

I would recommend this book highly to any anesthesiologist who deals with pediatric patients either occasionally or regularly. In addition, this book will likely prove quite useful in pre-assessment clinics and operating suite locations, as a quick reference when faced with uncommon pediatric syndromes.

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## **Textbook of Regional Anesthesia and Acute Pain Management**

*Admir Hadzic.* McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 2006. Hardcover, \$243.95 Can. ISBN 007144906X

The editor prefaces this book by stating that “research efforts, data on improved patient outcomes with regional anesthesia and better pain management, and the rapid growth of ambulatory surgery have come together to provide an exciting environment for a renaissance of regional anesthesia and its role in peri-operative management of acute pain”. The editor has undertaken a challenge in writing this book in one of the “most exciting periods in the development of regional anesthesia”.

This is a comprehensive textbook of regional anesthesia and is written with a clear purpose and target. It is divided into 14 parts and a total of 83 mostly well written chapters by 126 experts, the vast majority of whom are from North America.

Part 1 deals with the relevant history, and is interesting, as most books on regional anesthesia now tend to avoid historical details. In part 2, the authors provide details of anatomy and physiology as well as pharmacology of local anesthetic agents. Part 3 addresses the clinical practice of regional anesthesia. This chapter is the backbone of the text and provides an in-depth description of various blocks, functional anatomy, landmarks, techniques, indications, contraindications, choice of drugs, as well as related complications and how to avoid them. Part 4 explores new and emerging concepts in peripheral nerve blocks. Ultrasound in regional anesthesia is an identifiable field and is gaining popularity. Part 5 has three chapters dedicated to ultrasound-assisted regional anesthesia techniques in adults as well as children. Regional anesthesia related to obstetric practice is dealt with in part 6, the first few pages of which summarize alterations in maternal physiology. The inclusion of systemic methods of analgesia appears to be out of place in a textbook on regional anesthesia. Part 7 provides a thorough evaluation of regional anesthesia for pediatric surgery and acute pain management in children. The next three parts detail regional anesthesia in patients with special considerations, specific patient population and perioperative management. Part 11 is dedicated to neurological complications of regional anesthesia, their management and strategies to decrease patient risks. There is a section dedicated to "peripheral nerve blocks in anesthetized patients". In part 12, the authors discuss effects of regional anesthesia on perioperative outcomes, implications in ambulatory surgery, and early rehabilitation. In the final chapters of the book, a variety of topics are covered. These include acute pain management, organization of an acute pain service, and documentation and training in regional anesthesia. A unique feature of this book is the inclusion of a chapter dedicated to principles of statistical methods for research in regional anesthesia. This chapter provides clinicians with an important opportunity to understand the essentials of study design, sample size calculations, types of methodological errors, clinical relevance, as well as common pitfalls in the presentation of study results.

Each chapter of this text contains relevant figures, tables, photographs and "clinical pearls". The latter present a summation of take-home lessons from each chapter. A casual reader can gain an elementary knowledge of the topic in many chapters merely by reading the "clinical pearls" and tables. However, their consistency and usefulness vary to a certain degree from chapter to chapter. Of particular interest are coloured photographs which provide anatomical landmark overlays and relevant cadaveric anatomy.

Most of the book is in colour, and this adds favourable emphasis to its readability. This text is generously and appropriately referenced. With respect to style, most parts of the book provide interesting and informative reading, although the writing in some sections can be somewhat mundane.

Overall, *Textbook of Regional Anesthesia and Acute Pain Management* is an authoritative text which will provide a useful addition to our departmental library. This textbook of regional anesthesia achieves many of its aims, foremost, in providing an in-depth reference source in the field, as well as a practical training guide. The rotating resident, general anesthesiologist and clinical fellow may wish to seek one of the less comprehensive reference sources for an introduction to the subspecialty.

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#### **ThoracicAnesthesia.com**

<http://thoracic-anesthesia.com>

Peter Slinger MD

ThoracicAnesthesia.com is a free "education, information, and reference service" for individuals wishing to learn about anesthesia for thoracic surgery. It is primarily a continuing education service run by Dr. Peter Slinger, Professor of Anesthesia at the University of Toronto and Toronto General Hospital, an individual with a long history of important contributions to thoracic anesthesia. In addition, an International Editorial Board provides guidance to the project.

The principal offerings of the site include a series of didactic pieces and teaching slide sets, a series of journal article synopses, a bronchial anatomy quiz, and a bronchoscopy simulator. Access to the bronchoscopy simulator section requires that individuals first register for the site, as well as complete the rather challenging 16 question bronchial anatomy quiz. Fortunately, this need be done only once to access the simulator indefinitely.

The bronchoscopy simulator is unquestionably the best part of the site. Here, using real-time video based on an Adobe Flash platform one can navigate through the tracheobronchial tree with controls for moving your virtual bronchoscope forward, backwards, and in diagonal directions. This process is aided by a "macro" view on the left panel (called a "bronchial tree navigational map view") and a "micro" view on the right panel ("bronchoscope view"), as illustrated in the Figure. If desired, zooming in and out and add-

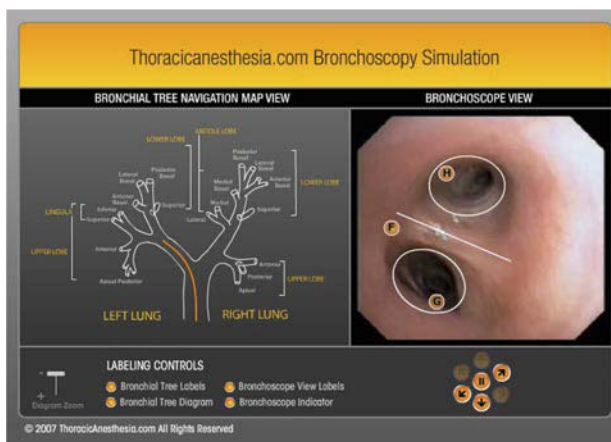


FIGURE Sample screen shot from the bronchoscopy simulator (reproduced with permission from Dr. Peter Slinger).

## ERRATUM

In the manuscript entitled: “Priming with rocuronium accelerates neuromuscular block in children: a prospective randomized study” published in the July 2007 issue, *Can J Anesth* 2007; 54: 538–43, on page 541, the labelling on the Figure should read: Time to maximum twitch depression (sec) instead of (min). The publisher apologizes for this error.

ing or removing labels on the displayed material can be controlled simply by clicking on the appropriate controls. Most importantly, clicking on various labels in the bronchoscope view will launch further information in the map view, making the experience intuitive and even enjoyable. Besides working with the existing Web site material, readers can submit questions or cases in the “Contact Us” section. These will then be discussed by members of the board and form the basis for future postings.

The site admittedly has some minor annoyances. For instance, I was unable to determine who was on the International Editorial Board by navigating through the site. Also, even after registering and completing the required quiz, I was still unable to access the section entitled “Restricted Articles”, as the site required that I must then retake the bronchial anatomy quiz after having played with the simulator. This is to allow the site owners to collect pre- and post intervention data to rigorously demonstrate that this educational modality does its job effectively (which it unquestionably does, in my view).

Overall, ThoracicAnesthesia.com is one of the finest anesthesia sites on the Web. I commend the efforts of Dr. Slinger and his collaborators, and recommend the site without reservation.

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