

Principles and practice of pediatric neurosurgery

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This third edition of *Principles and Practice of Pediatric Neurosurgery*, edited by A. Leland Albright, Ian F. Pollack, and P. David Adelson, essentially conveys the expertise and the clinical practice of the Anglo-Saxon pediatric neurosurgeons in 82 chapters written by 159 specialists (137 from the USA, 11 from Canada, 3 from South Africa, 2 from Great Britain, 1 Australia, and the remaining five, 4 from Israel and 1 from Japan, respectively). This “geographically” oriented characteristic of the book is obvious also in the initial chapter which summarizes the history of pediatric neurosurgery with a description of pediatric neurosurgical development programs and institutions. This chapter, though interesting and aimed at identifying the worldwide contributions to the development of the specialty, omits the role of relevant European centers (e.g., Marseille, Lyon, Madrid, Rome, etc.) that have contributed significantly to the identification of pediatric neurosurgery in the last three decades. The volume is organized in nine sections which follow the traditional architecture of handbooks devoted to pediatric neurosurgery with an introductory part devoted to general topics concerning the pediatric patient, one final chapter on pediatric anesthesia and the remaining sections dealing with developmental disorders, neoplasms, traumas, cerebrovascular diseases, and functional and infectious disorders. One general feature of the majority of the

chapters of the book is to be concise though particularly comprehensive are the related reference lists. This new edition continues to represent pediatric neurosurgery at its best and provides a clear picture of the progresses made by the specialty. Some chapters see for example those on pediatric neurosurgery in developing countries or on ethical issues stimulate the reader to think beyond the borders of the mere clinical practice. Others chapters fill the gap that usually exist between pediatric and general neurosurgery. I am referring in particular to the chapter dealing with skull base tumors. On the other hand, some omissions remain unjustified in such a comprehensive book, as, for example, the missed stratification of ependymomas on the grounds of recent acquired knowledge on the molecular differences which characterize subgroups of these tumors and account for the different outcomes. However, in spite of minor limitations, the book stands as the most reliable source, currently available, of information concerning the pediatric neurological diseases, which can be treated by the neurosurgeon. Consequently, it can be suggested not only to the surgeon already acquainted with this subspecialty but also to the general neurosurgeon. The want-to-be pediatric neurosurgeon will find the book a stimulating tool to be accompanied in the difficult process of becoming able to care of the pediatric neurosurgical population.

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