Anaesthesia, Intensive Care and Perioperative Medicine A-Z: An Encyclopaedia of Principles and Practice, 6th Edition

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Anaesthesia & Intensive Care A-Z is a valuable addition to the literature of our expanding specialty. Authors Steve M. Yentis, Nicholas P. Hirsch, and James K. Ip (previously with Gary B. Smith) have continued to update this book periodically since its first edition was published 25 years ago. Now in its sixth edition, this moderate-to-large size reference to me, is its best version to date.

As suggested by its name, an encyclopedic view of the principles and practice of anesthesia, intensive care, and in this edition, perioperative medicine is presented. Entries are arranged in alphabetical order, and topics are discussed in a concise fashion. The breadth of the content of this book is outstanding. In contrast to standard anesthesia textbooks, its unique content arrangement and its rapid-fire topic presentations make it a highly enjoyable read and a good resource for trainees and practicing anesthesiologists alike.

A few features stand out in this new edition. First, extensive updates are clearly evident throughout. Topics are covered in an up-to-date, succinct fashion with recent references provided at the conclusion. Some of the older topics that have become less relevant in today's practice appear to have been abridged.

Second, similar to previous editions, the scope of the book remains truly encyclopedic. In addition to clinical anesthesia and critical care, the authors cover an exhaustive list of topics in the areas of general and anesthetic pharmacology, physiology, clinical anatomy, basic statistics, internal medicine, organization, radiology,

physics principles, and anesthesia equipment. It is worth noting that the coverage of physics in particular and relevant areas of pharmacology and physiology is nothing short of excellent.

Third, this new edition starts with what the authors called an "Examination Revision Checklist." Analogous to the Contents section of any textbook, this checklist presents classic subject headings with relevant sub-entries. For readers interested in pursuing a more classic presentation of a subject (e.g., a clinician interested in reviewing pediatric anesthesia), this checklist may provide a good reading sequence. In addition, candidates challenged by the UK Royal College of Anaesthetist's examination may find it useful for tracking their study progress. It is our opinion, however, that tackling this book using the checklist is less enjoyable than browsing through its alphabetically organized short topics or referring to them on an as-needed basis.

Fourth, the authors strike an excellent balance between brevity and comprehensiveness. This however, is a double-edged sword. Although most of the contemporary anesthesia topics are well presented, some of the critical care topics provide a good topic summary but fall short of addressing current state-of-the-art practice recommendations. This lack was evident for topics such as glycemic control in the intensive care unit, prone ventilation for acute respiratory distress syndrome, targeted temperature management for post-cardiac arrest patients, and management of sepsis and septic shock. In fairness, though, these minor omissions were few and far between.

Fifth, the historical vignettes, although brief, are particularly enjoyable. At the conclusion of some topics, reference is made to the scientist who discovered a related phenomenon or a clinician with significant contributions to the subject. In addition, historical figures and important

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contributors to the specialty are discussed under headings of their own. Finally, special reference is made to the practice of anesthesia in the UK throughout the book. This does not, however, take away from its generalizability and should not deter the interested anesthesiologist practicing outside the UK from referring to this excellent textbook.

In summary, I recommend *Anaesthesia, Intensive Care and Perioperative Medicine A-Z* as a quick reference for the time-constrained anesthesiologist and the critical care physician. A busy practicing anesthesiologist interested in a short review (e.g., of an uncommon disease or a new medication) will find this *Encyclopaedia* an excellent resource. Anesthesia trainees are likely to benefit most from this book and can use it as a foundation for their lifelong learning journey. Critical care physicians are also likely to enjoy the book's concise presentation style. Having had a previous version of this book myself as a resident, I often turned to it for quick reference – and was

never dissatisfied! As a practicing critical care physician and anesthesiologist, I am still surprised at what I continue to learn from this enjoyable text. In conclusion, for the North American reader who does not mind the British vernacular, quite a few gems and pearls await you within the pages of this book.

Conflicts of interest None declared.

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