

Paediatric handbook, fifth edition

By: The staff of the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia

Ed: Efron D

Blackwell Science Pty Ltd, 54 University Street, Carlton, Victoria 3053, Australia

A\$39.95, pp 520, ISBN 0 86793 337 2

I have enjoyed reading the Paediatric Handbook, which is intended to be a reference for use by general practitioners and hospital residents working in paediatric units. The handbook of 520 pages and 35 chapters gives a clear and concise account of the current management of problems that are frequently encountered in paediatric practice.

One of the new features in this edition is the incorporation of management algorithms, but I have only found some of them to be useful. The chapter on 'Pharmacopoeia' by Frank Shann consists of 50 pages of useful drug dosages which most paediatricians will find immensely helpful. Two chapters, 'The death of a child' and 'Acute pain management', deal with two

common problems frequently neglected in paediatric texts, and should be interesting to residents.

Although the management protocols featured in the book may sometimes be different from those recommended in Hong Kong, most hospital trainees will find the handbook a useful handy reference in their daily practice.

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A clinical atlas of Chinese infants

By: Li AMC, Yeung CY

Hong Kong University Press, 14/F Hing Wai Industrial Centre, 7 Tin Wan Praya Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong

HK\$120, pp 96, ISBN 962 209 390 6

This 96-page pocket-size book consists of 160 clinical photographs collected by two paediatricians, each with over 30 years of experience of practice in Hong Kong. As the authors state in the preface, a number of paediatric atlases are already available but this is the first one that uses only illustrations of Chinese infants. Although most of the conditions described are not unique in Chinese infants (there are in fact very few such conditions), an all-Chinese paediatric atlas should be welcomed by local health care givers and medical students who have to deal with Oriental babies in their day-to-day practice.

The book is divided into eight sections: The Newborn (27 illustrations), The Preterm Baby (13 illustrations), Trauma (12 illustrations), Infection (18 illustrations), Congenital Conditions (36 illustrations), Syndromes (29 illustrations), Jaundice (9 illustrations), and Development in the First Year (16 illustrations). Except for the last section, most of the book's contents are devoted to the neonatal period, despite its

title which implies a wider coverage from birth to 12 months. This is, however, understandable as most of the occurrences of morbidity in infancy have their origin from birth. The illustrations are nicely presented and have been well-chosen to cover a wide variety of topics. Personally, I would like to see more illustrations of normal neonatal conditions included in the 'Newborn' section, but a book of this size could not be exhaustive.

The authors have meticulously put together a variety of common conditions and some rare but visually interesting ones, and I think this is an effort well spent. Most of the photographs are of an acceptable quality. There are, however, a few that are out of focus or have been taken under suboptimal lighting. Although not significantly affecting the book's readability, they are straining to the eyes and would be an area for improvement when the authors consider writing their second edition. The legends are concise, easy to read, and accurately describe the conditions.

I particularly like the way the authors summarise the clinical significance of each condition at the end of each legend; their natural course, treatment, and prognosis are highlighted concisely. This should be helpful to the beginner, who might find it difficult to find this information from the voluminous standard paediatric texts.

This book should make a useful and convenient complimentary addition to standard textbooks. It should also be a useful learning aid to medical students and

paediatric trainees preparing for examinations. The marked price of HK\$120 seems reasonable, given the high production cost involved in printing the photographs.

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Info-Med orthopaedics, volumes 1 and 2

Ed: Leung PC, Chan KM, Cheng JCY, Leung KS, Hung LK

Waverly Info-Med Ltd

US\$44.95, pp 416 and 500, ISBN 962 356 003 6 and 962 356 008 7

Orthopaedics is an expanding specialty, as reflected by the growing number of subspecialties, and journals and books on the subject. To obtain, and keep up-to-date with, the most current information is becoming a real challenge. The Info-Med Orthopaedics Series attempts to bridge the gap for busy physicians so that they can keep up with the most important recent developments that are related to orthopaedic practice. To balance the fragmentation due to subspecialisation, the editors have tried to create a quick, wide-ranging reference that covers all the major areas in this specialty.

In volume I, there are sections covering general reconstruction in the adult, and paediatric orthopaedics. They are collections of abstracts that present the current views about subjects such as paediatric hip pathology and management, and adult knee reconstruction. The sections on hand surgery and sports medicine occupy a significant position, and rightly so, since they correspond to fast-developing areas of orthopaedics.

As mentioned in the book's editorial introduction, the Info-Med Orthopaedics Series would like to serve as yearbooks for Asian orthopaedic surgeons. The section on Asian papers in volume I is certainly worth reading. The selected abstracts represent contributions from Asian surgeons in all aspects of the field. A significant number of the abstracts, however, are taken from regional and national journals that are not readily accessible.

In volume II, the quality and quantity seem somewhat improved, through the contributions from the

international and regional advisors, and from the Board of Editors. Once again, all the major subspecialties are included in this volume, and the abstracts reflect the most recent advancements in the field.

The 'Adult Reconstruction' section has as its main theme some experiences and developments in the topic of joint replacement. This seems apt, since joint replacement is becoming an increasingly common problem in an ageing population.

Following the style of volume I, the sections that deal with hand surgery and sports medicine occupy a significant portion of volume II; this is also true for the sections on trauma and paediatric orthopaedics. There is a chapter well-worth reading that is devoted to basic research; it provides readers with information about the latest advancements in areas such as bone healing, biomechanics, nerve physiology and healing, prostheses, and infection. It also helps to introduce to the profession a renewed stimulus and interest in basic research.

In both volumes, the abstracts have come from a large number of reference journals and have been carefully selected by the book's Board of Editors. One has to comment that the titles of the abstracts are absent in the contents pages; however, the subject index was useful and will serve the same function as a title index for searching for particular topics. The abstracts are presented in a clear summary format that can be easily understood.

In order to facilitate discussion, comments—both