

# Pain and anxiety control for the conscious dental patient

Ed: Meechan JG, Robb ND, Seymour RA

Oxford University Press, 18/F Warwick House East, Taikoo Place, 979 King's Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong  
HK\$450, pp 373, ISBN 0 19 262848 8

*Pain and Anxiety Control for the Conscious Dental Patient* is based on the practice in the United Kingdom and covers the anatomy and physiology of pain transmission with special reference to dental pain, dental local anaesthesia, alternative methods of pain control in dentistry, and analgesics used for dental pain. It provides current information, is simple to read, and is well illustrated.

The anatomy and physiology of pain transmission are described well. Topics include peripheral neural mechanisms of pain, pain pathways, neuroanatomy of dental pain, theories of pain, and both peripheral and central mediators. This section provides the reader with an understanding of the various processes involved in pain and nociception, and the background on which the treatment of dental pain is based.

The chapters on local anaesthetics provide useful and up-to-date information on the pharmacology of pain-relief drugs, equipment, methods of injection, and complications of local anaesthesia. The highlight of this section is the practical approach to the subject, such as the way to use the syringes, the various methods that can be used for nerve blocks, the maximum doses, and the reasons for failure and its management. There is also an easy-to-read account of the non-pharmacological alternatives to pain control, such as hypnosis, electronic dental anaesthesia, and acupuncture.

The chapters on conscious sedation cover oral, transmucosal, inhalational, and intravenous sedation

as practised in the United Kingdom. Again, the highlight of this section is the practical approach to the subject. Inhalational sedation and intravenous sedation are well covered; subjects include the pharmacology of sedative drugs, equipment, technique, and complications.

The additional chapters on monitoring and medico-legal aspects emphasise the importance of these factors in the practice of sedation. The limitation of polypharmacy in sedation to a few paragraphs makes the reader realise the preference for purely monovalent techniques as recommended by the General Dental Council of the United Kingdom.

Analgesics are described at the end of the book and give special reference to their application in post-operative dental pain. The preference of using non-narcotic analgesics over opioids for dental pain is also discussed.

*Pain and Anxiety Control for the Conscious Dental Patient* is well written and will be extremely useful for undergraduate and postgraduate dental students. It will also be a good reference and would be a useful addition to any dental library.

Dr MRC Rodrigo  
Associate Professor in Anaesthesiology  
The University of Hong Kong  
Queen Mary Hospital  
Pokfulam  
Hong Kong