



BOOK REVIEW

Paediatric Trauma and Child Abuse

Edited by Sebastian van As and Sudeshmi Naidoo. Pp. viii + 344. Illustrated. R239.95. Oxford University Press SA. 2007. ISBN 978-9-57659-4.

Trauma and violence to children are major factors contributing to the unacceptably high morbidity and mortality among our children. This soft-cover handbook was written by mostly South African experts in the field of trauma and violence to children and is a collective and timely publication. The book is physically attractive and is divided into two sections – one on ‘child trauma and abuse’ and the second section on ‘the management of child injuries’. For clarification this component was further subdivided into the early and definitive management of specific childhood injuries.

The chapters have a consistent design throughout the book, with objectives, introduction, diagnosis and management and recommended reading. Some chapters have basic information on the physiology and pathogenesis which greatly contributed to an understanding of the subsequent management programmes. There are also important caveats and line

drawings which further enhance the text. The individual chapters provide objective information and contain sufficient detail for the specialists, generalists, and professions allied to medicine. It was refreshing to find chapters on medico-legal issues, post-traumatic stress disorder in children and adolescence and nursing care which to me rounded off the publication.

Due to the nature of child trauma it is inevitable to find factual overlap between the chapters. This, however, does not distract but rather re-emphasises important points in management. The publication is child orientated regarding dosages, schedule of drugs, measurements and useful algorithms. The few sketches and line drawings are useful in understanding the differences between children and adults.

I could find no obvious mistakes or omissions of importance. I enjoyed reading the book and would recommend it to everyone working in the field of child abuse and trauma. It should be on your shelf as well as in all emergency departments, resource centres and consulting rooms. This publication will become a standard reference in South Africa. Well done!

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