

Books

ABC of Sports Medicine*

Edited by Greg McLatchie, Mark Harries, John King and Clyde Williams. Pp. vii + 109. Illustrated. £16. London: BMJ. 1995. ISBN 0-7279-0844-8.

The *ABC of Sports Medicine* is a collection of sports medicine articles published sequentially in the *British Medical Journal*. This collection covers 25 topics written by British sports medicine experts and is divided into three sections – surgical, medical and general.

The surgical section includes chapters on general management and prevention of sports injuries, two concise and handy chapters on the management of head injuries and of acutely injured joints, musculoskeletal injuries in child athletes, immediate management of severe injuries and overuse injuries. The medical section includes chapters on overuse injuries, osteoporosis and exercise, infections, the overtraining syndrome, sudden death, assessment of physical performance, nutritional aids, drug use, and team medical care. Included in the section on general topics are chapters on the benefits of exercise, sports for older persons and those with disabilities, sports physiotherapy, exercise psychology and medical coverage for major events.

The stated aim of the book is to increase the general understanding of doctors who have an interest in sports medicine but who do not consider themselves specialists. The book should succeed in this fairly circumscribed goal. It is an introductory primer that will be of interest to professionals with any shade of interest in the sports medicine and exercise sciences. It serves as an excellent introductory text that captures the scope and excitement of this rapidly evolving area of medical specialisation.

But it is not a textbook and does not contain sufficient information to approach completeness. Some of the chapters are perhaps too basic or lack depth, others contain occasional examples of dated or incorrect information.

These criticisms are, however, essentially trivial. As an introductory text, the book has much to recommend it. For the volume of information it contains, it is also very competitively priced. For those who want to know more

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about the scope of sports medicine and the exercise science, this textbook is an ideal place to start.

T D Noakes

Alternatives to Antibiotics*

By John McKenna. Pp. 160. Illustrated. R59.95. Cape Town: Struik Publishers. 1996. ISBN 1-86872-007-1.

Those who labour at the medical coalface of general practice will be aware of an increasing reluctance on the part of many mothers to use antibiotics on their sick children, as well as a reluctance to take them for their own ailments. Much of the blame for this particular swing of the therapeutic pendulum can be laid at the door of doctors themselves. It is well known that most upper respiratory infections are caused by viruses. It is equally well known that most of them are treated with antibiotics which are not only ineffective, but also do harm by interfering with the

body's own spectrum of bacterial flora as well as encouraging the phenomenon of bacterial resistance to antibiotics. There can be little argument that although antibiotics may be life-saving when employed for the correct indications, they are in general scandalously misused.

It is this particular nettle that John McKenna has grasped, and he makes a good case. He also advocates herbal, homeopathic and nutritional approaches to the treatment of infection, and this is where the academically orientated will part company with him. The double-blind, randomised, prospective, placebo-controlled, statistically validated study remains the cornerstone of proof of efficacy of today's treatments, and much of his advocacy of the less orthodox treatment modalities are going to be regarded as anecdotal by the purists. However, they do at least obey one of Hippocrates' most important dicta, which is more than can be said for many of our modern drugs. 'Primum non nocere' – first do no harm.

N C Lee

Books received

The receipt of these books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits. The SAMJ does not publish unsolicited reviews.

Emergency Triage.* Manchester Triage Group. Edited by Kevin Mackway-Jones. Pp. ix + 156. Illustrated. £15. London: BMJ. 1997. ISBN 0-7279-1126-0.

Sense and Sensibility in Health Care.* Edited by Marshall Marinker. Pp. ix + 281. £23.95. London: BMJ. 1996. ISBN 0-7279-1111-2.

Gastrointestinal Bleeding.* Edited by Neville Krasner. Pp. xiii + 352. Illustrated. £75. London: BMJ. 1996. ISBN 0-7279-1008-6.

Management of Gastrointestinal Cancer.* Edited by Peter McCulloch and Andrew Kingsnorth. Pp. xvi + 404. Illustrated. £78. London: BMJ. 1996. ISBN 0-7279-1071-X.

Heart Disease in Pregnancy.* Edited by Celia Oakley. Pp. xxxi + 439. Illustrated. £73. 1997. London: BMJ. ISBN 0-7279-1065-5.

Themselves Writ Large. The British Medical Association 1832-1966.* By Peter Bartrip. Pp. xviii + 373. £32. 1996. London: BMJ. ISBN 9-780727-909985.

Organ Transplantation. Edited by P Hervé *et al.* Pp. xx + 1436. Illustrated. £200/US\$366. 1996. London: John Libbey & Co Ltd. ISBN 0-86196-383-0.

Economic Evaluation of Epilepsy Management. Edited by C H Pachlatko and RG Beran. Pp. 112. £20/US\$37. 1996. London: John Libbey & Co Ltd. ISBN 0-86196-556-6.

Iron Nutrition in Health and Disease. Edited by Leif Hallberg and Nils-Georg Asp. Pp. viii + 364. Illustrated. £45/US\$83. 1996. London: John Libbey & Co Ltd. ISBN 0-86196-544-2.

An Illustrated History of Medicine. By Jennifer Cochrane. Pp. 144. Illustrated. R94.95. 1996. Twickenham: Tiger Books International PLC (SA representative: Macdonald Purnell (Pty) Ltd). ISBN 1-85501-809-8.

French's Index of Differential Diagnosis.* 13th edition. Edited by Ian AD Bouchier, Harold Ellis and Peter R Fleming. Pp. xv + 811. Illustrated. R389. Isando: Heinemann. ISBN 0-7506-1434-X.

Control of Hereditary Diseases.* Report of a WHO Scientific Group. WHO Technical Report Series No. 865. Pp. v + 84 pages. SwFr16/US\$14.40. 1996. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-4-120865-1.

WHO Expert Committee on Specifications for Pharmaceutical Preparations. Thirty-fourth Report.* Technical Report Series No. 863. Pp. vi + 194. SwFr35/US\$31.50. 1996. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-4-120863-5.

1,2-Dibromoethane.* Environmental Health Criteria No. 177. Pp. 148. SwFr30/US\$27. 1996. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-4-157177-2.

Thallium.* Environmental Health Criteria No. 182. Pp. 274. SwFr51/US\$45.90. 1996. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-4-157182-9.

Chlorendic Acid and Anhydride.* Environmental Health Criteria No. 185. Pp. 74. SwFr21/US\$18.90. 1996. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-4-157185-3.

Methylene Chloride.* Second edition. Environmental Health Criteria No. 164. Pp. 242. SwFr46/US\$41.40. 1996. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-4-157164-0.

Development in Biological Standardization. Volume 88. Viral Safety and Evaluation of Viral Clearance from Biopharmaceutical Products. Edited by F Brown and AS Lubiniecki. Pp. x + 350. SwFr315/DM377/US\$274. 1996. Basel: Karger. ISBN 3-8055-6391-4.

Chemical Immunology. Volume 65. Antibody Engineering. Edited by J Donald Capra. Pp. xii + 212. SwFr112.50/DM135/US\$98. 1997. Basel: Karger. ISBN 3-8055-6356-6.

The Person Behind the Syndrome. By Peter Beighton and Greta Beighton. Pp. xvii + 231. Illustrated. DM89/SwFr78.50. 1997. Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag. ISBN 3-540-76044-X.

Menslike Anatomie.* By JH Meiring *et al.* Pp. x + 772. Geillustreerd. R180. 1997. Pretoria: JL van Schaik Uitgewers. ISBN 0-627-02199-9.

Adverse Drug Reaction Terms: Definitions. Respiratory Disorders Skin Disorders.* CIOMS. Pp. 28. SwFr10/US\$9. 1996. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-9036-064X.

World Health Statistics Annual 1995.* WHO. Pp. xxv + 852. SwFr150/US\$135. Geneva: WHO. ISBN 92-4-067950-2.

Lever's Histopathology of the Skin.* By David Elder, Rosalie Elenitsas, Christine Jaworsky and Bennett Johnson, Jr. Pp. xvii + 1073. Illustrated. US\$90. 1997. New York: Lippincott-Raven. ISBN 0-397-51500-6.

MedPages Health Care Directory 1997. Gauteng.* Edited by Ian Neuburger and Sean Khoury. Pp. xxv + 591. R70. 1997. Greenpoint: MedPages. ISBN 0-620-19641-6.