

## BOOKS / BOEKE

### ABC series from the BMJ

**ABC of Monitoring Drug Therapy.** By J. K. Aronson, M. Hardman and D. J. M. Reynolds. Pp. ix + 38. Illustrated. £9. BMJ. 1993. (ABC books are available through the Book Division, MASA Publications, tel. (021) 531-3081.) ISBN 0-7279-0791-3.

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N. C. LEE

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The importance of rendering safe sterile grafts is highlighted, because of the danger of transmitting diseases like AIDS or hepatitis to recipients. The guidelines in harvesting, procuring and storage of tissue proposed in this book are the state-of-the-art methodology.

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**BOOKS / BOEKE**

**Tobacco smoking**

**Legislative Action to Combat the World Tobacco Epidemic.** 2nd ed. R. Roemer. Pp. xiii + 297. SFr.59. in developing countries: SFr.41,30. WHO. 1993. ISBN 92-4-156157-2.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) first published this title in 1982, updated it in 1986, and has now brought out a 2nd edition. And not before time, as the tobacco industry looks for new markets in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Eastern Europe, while tobacco use in industrialised countries declines.

Legislation in many developing countries is weak or non-existent and unless the smoking epidemic is curtailed, preventable death and disease may swamp the health services. The figures quoted are horrific: if smoking habits are not changed, there may be 10 million tobacco-related deaths per year by the year 2025.

A WHO expert committee reported in 1983 that smoking control programmes without legislation do not work, since education, restriction and legislation form the core of smoking control.

This is a worthwhile reference work for anyone involved in research on smoking control and tobacco use, and an interesting historical document. It gives the history of anti-tobacco legislation, with a tabulated annexure of eight types of legislation: smoking in the workplace, preventing young people from smoking, health education on tobacco, restriction of points of sale, health warnings, and control of tobacco advertising. Each type is listed with the countries having such legislation. Annexures give details of legislation worldwide, and some economic information.

This book gives useful information and guidance for future anti-tobacco legislation in South Africa. Such legislation will be of paramount importance considering the anticipated burden on health services of future afflictions such as AIDS.

There is no doubt that tobacco marketing will result in increased sales and smoking-related diseases. It is thus essential that the book be read by anyone with influence over future anti-tobacco legislation.

F. N. SANDERS

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There is, however, increasing global repugnance of crude sports sponsorship aimed to increase the childhood population of smokers! What is not mentioned is that when the Cape Town City Council several years ago tried to

introduce bans on smoking in restaurants, Rembrandt Tobacco Corporation threatened to withdraw its subsidy for the Cape Symphony Orchestra. A more blatant example of attempts by the industry to influence public policy would be hard to find. But the Tobacco Products Control Act of 1993 will probably be the start of more comprehensive legislation that should limit the future success of the industry.

As with other government boards set up to promote the interests of tobacco producers, the Tobacco Board will probably be phased out in time; it can only be hoped that this will happen soon.

On the positive side, tobacco control opponents could learn considerably from the author and producers of the book. It is easy to read and well illustrated. Despite this, I would prefer to rename the book *There's Death in my Leaf*, a more accurate reflection of the impact of tobacco on global health over the past five centuries.

(Published by request of the Tobacco Board to commemorate the 500th birthday of *Nicotiana tabacum*. 1492 - 1992)

D. YACH

**Nutrition**

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You want a little book that gives you everything you want to know about nutrition? About a balanced diet? About the prudent diet? About therapeutic diets? About recommended daily food intakes? Then this is the booklet for you. Produced by the South African Medical Research Council, it contains everything you need to know about diet in a practical sense.

The book is appearing at a time when widespread interest in nutrition is manifesting itself not only within the medical profession but among the general public, and this book contains information with which every clinician should be familiar. It retails at a mere R19,99 from any good bookseller, is well worth the price and deserves a place on every medical bookshelf. Very highly recommended.

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**Biliary stones**

**Baillière's Clinical Gastroenterology. International Practice and Research. Diagnosis and Management of Biliary Stones.** Ed. by M. Sackmann. Pp. x + 200. Illustrated. £27,50. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1992. ISBN 0-7020-1625-X.

This monograph provides a detailed overview on the clinical spectrum and modern treatment options for gallbladder and bile-duct stones. The important aspect of clinical presentation of gallstone disease is reviewed in great detail, and the variability in clinical presentation and the natural history of asymptomatic stones is emphasised.

The roles of dissolution therapy and shockwave lithotripsy, with an update on published trials, are covered comprehensively as is laparoscopic cholecystectomy. Two chapters are devoted to the endoscopic and surgical treatment of bile-duct stones but, disappointingly, there is not much on the treatment of gallstone pancreatitis. The pathogenesis of gallstone disease is also not reviewed.

Overall, this book gives a good summary of the current options and trends in the diagnosis and management of gallstone disease.

P. C. BORNMANN

**Molecular and cell biology**

**Basic Molecular and Cell Biology.** 2nd ed. Pp. vii + 209. Illustrated. BMJ. 1993. ISBN 0-7279-0772-7.

This is the second edition of the *BMJ's* excellent booklet that guides the reader through the field of molecular biology and cell biology. There can be few areas in which sophisticated basic biological science can have such a direct clinical application as this one, and although much has already been achieved, much remains to be achieved, particularly in the field of oncology.

A major advance that has already led to important clinical applications is the polymerase chain reaction, which has enabled early diagnosis of genetic disease using fetal DNA. This technique has been described in some detail in this edition. A particularly informative chapter is 'Genes and Cancer', which explains the oncogene cascade, and also the intriguing tumour-suppression genes, as well as the relationship between cancer cells and the immune system.

Those wishing to brush up their knowledge of this fast-moving field will find that this admirably concise little book is the one for them.

N. C. LEE

**Nutritional anaemias**

**Nutritional Anaemias. Nestlé Nutritional Workshop Series. Vol. 30.** Ed by Samuel J. Fomon and Stanley Zlotkin. Pp. xii + 220. \$75. New York: Raven Press. 1992.

This volume contains the proceedings of a workshop held in Toronto, Canada, in June 1991. The contributors are experts in the fields of iron, folate, vitamin A, copper and vitamin E metabolism and deficiencies.

The chapters include accessible reviews of our current knowledge of iron deficiency, much of it derived from the activities of members of the International Nutritional Anaemia Consultative Group over the last two decades. Recent advances include observations on calcium as an inhibitor of iron absorption (MacPhail and Bothwell). An

advance is the measurement of serum transferrin receptor levels in the diagnosis of iron deficiency. Serum transferrin receptor levels reflect the cells' iron requirements, are a measure of the severity of iron deficiency and are unchanged by inflammation; a combination of serum ferritin and serum transferrin receptor assays portrays the entire spectrum of iron status ranging from normal to severe deficiency, and this combination is likely to become standard investigation (Cook, Skikne and Baynes).

Dr Walter from Chile presents convincing evidence that iron deficiency severe enough to cause anaemia in infancy is associated with impaired mental and motor development, and that the cognitive deficiency is persistent and not reversible by treatment of the iron deficiency. The implications of these observations are of global importance.

Prevention of iron deficiency by diet is usually thought of as a lost cause, but Dr Hallberg and colleagues are more positive and propose that they could make a large impact in developing countries. In food fortification programmes, NaFeEDTA has emerged as a most effective, though relatively expensive, fortificant especially in the face of diets with high contents of inhibitors of iron absorption (Bothwell and MacPhail).

Dr Brabin reviewed the role of malarial haemolysis as a cause of severe folate deficiency in pregnancy, but not in childhood. Studies have been bedevilled by malarial parasitaemia being associated with high red cell folate concentrations even when the host is folate-depleted. The reason could be synthesis of folate by the parasites.

In vitamin A deficiency, there is a failure of mobilisation of iron from body stores, and interventions in many populations may have to include vitamin A with iron to obtain optimal results. (Mejia).

Dr Zipursky reviews and redefines anaemia in newborn infants. He reports that excessive vitamin C in multivitamin preparations and commercial weaning foods, can produce oxidative damage of the erythrocytes of infants and a Heinz body anaemia.

All 16 chapters are of the highest standards and the reported discussions should make readers wish that they had been present. The book is recommended for medical libraries and everyone with an interest in nutritional anaemias, especially neonatologists, paediatricians, obstetricians, haematologists and food scientists.

A. F. FLEMING

**Books received**

**International Reporting of Periodic Drug-Safety Update Summaries. Final Report of CIOMS Working Group II.** Pp. 61. SFr. 15. US\$13,50. Geneva: CIOMS. 1992.

**International Nomenclature of Diseases. Vol. VII, Diseases of the Kidney, the Lower Urinary Tract, and the Male Genital System.** Pp. xiii + 180. Geneva: CIOMS/WHO. 1992.

**International Nomenclature of Diseases. Vol. VIII, Diseases of the Female Genital System.** Pp. xiii + 180. SFr. 20. US\$18. Geneva: CIOMS/WHO. 1992.

**Diethylhexyl Phthalate. Environmental Health Criteria 131.** Pp. 141. SFr. 18. US\$16, 20. Geneva: WHO. 1992.

**Human Organ Transplantation. A Report on Developments under the Auspices of WHO (1987-1991)** Pp. 28. SFr. 8. Geneva: WHO. 1991.

**International Digest of Health Legislation.** Vol. 43 No. 2 1992. Pp. xxiv + 220. SFr. 45. Geneva: WHO. 1992.

**WHO Drug Information.** Vol 6. No. 2. Pp. i + 53. SFr. 20. Geneva: WHO. 1992.

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