

Coloproctology

Modern Coloproctology: Surgical Grand Rounds from St Mark's Hospital. Ed. by Robin Phillips and John Northover. Pp. 195. Illustrated. London: Edward Arnold. 1993. ISBN 0-340-55258-1.

This small book contains 13 up-to-date reviews of topics in colorectal disease. It comes from a hospital with a reputation for excellent clinical research. Despite a strong surgical bias the subjects range from epidemiology (screening for colorectal cancer) to surgical technique (surgery for anal fistula) and complications of inflammatory bowel disease (pyoderma gangrenosum).

The book is based on talks given last year (1992). It has appeared promptly. Each subject is reviewed in depth, the references are comprehensive and the diagrams and photographs are clear. Authors from the hospital wrote all the contributions except one from North America and another from Sweden.

Much of the information has already been published as papers in journals. However, this book presents it in an easily accessible form. At about R150 it is a good buy for a surgeon with an interest in colorectal disease. Some of the subjects will also interest gastroenterologists and general surgeons with an academic bent. It should certainly find a place in medical school libraries.

M. MADDEN

BOOKS / BOEKE

Molecular pathology

Diagnostic Molecular Pathology: A Practical Approach. Vol. I & II. Ed. by C. S. Herrington and J. O'D. McGee. Pp. Vol. I xviii + 270; Vol. II xvi + 217. R284. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. 1992. ISBN Vol. I 0-19-963236-7, Vol. II 0-19-963238-3.

These 2 volumes on diagnostic molecular pathology by Herrington and McGee, both well known for their work in this area, meet the usual high standard of the *Practical Approach* series by the IRL/Oxford University Press. Advances in molecular biology in the last two decades have resulted in a paradigm shift in our approach to the understanding and diagnosis of disease, and molecular pathology techniques are being used increasingly in diagnostic pathology laboratories. Many pathologists lack formal training in molecular pathology and the extent to which they are required to become involved in this area varies from laboratory to laboratory.

This book is essential reading for pathologists with an interest in molecular techniques, whether they work at the bench or act as an interface between clinician and basic scientist. It provides a timely, much needed and comprehensive overview of techniques currently used in diagnostic molecular pathology. The layout is clear and concise, and most chapters start with detailed protocols followed by their diagnostic applications. Attention is given to the important areas of interpretation of results and possible pitfalls, with useful sections on trouble-shooting.

There is a wealth of practical detail, including that of equipment required, very valuable to those faced with the challenge of establishing molecular techniques in laboratories with little or no experience in this field. Particularly useful are sections on modifications of techniques to suit different types of material (cultured cells, clinical cytology specimens, fresh tissue, frozen tissue and archival material). Diagrams are clear, and the black-and-white photographs of *in situ* hybridisation results are generally good. Techniques covered include *in situ* hybridisation to DNA and RNA, blot hybridisation, PCR, interphase cytogenetics, and flow cytometry. There are now many diagnostic applications of these techniques, including diagnosis of malignancy and detection of viruses.

P. CLOSE
F. DA SILVA TATLEY

Rehabilitation after joint injuries

Training Therapy: Prophylaxis and Rehabilitation. 2nd revised ed. By Rolf Gustavsen and Renate Streeck. Pp. viii + 230. Illustrated. Stuttgart: George Thieme Verlag. 1993. ISBN 3-13-672502-6.

This book is a good review of the Scandinavian rehabilitation regimen, which combines medical training therapy and manual therapy. It can be applied to both peripheral and vertebral joint conditions in injured athletes and 'sedentary' patients.

The first section of the book analyses various dysfunctions, for example muscle imbalances and incorrect posture. Principles of self-mobilising and stabilising exercises for hypomobility and hypermobility respectively are discussed. Suggestions for presentation of back schools are given.

The second section includes application of treatment to improve and maintain range of movement, muscle strength, endurance and co-ordination. A variety of training methods and their effects is presented. Excellent illustrations are used for various examples of exercises using complex diago-

nal patterns of movement. Training exercises to improve strength and endurance of various muscle groups are depicted, with detail given to stabilisation of the spine.

A disadvantage of the regimen is that untrained patients may initially experience difficulty with the co-ordination of the diagonal patterns. Furthermore, extensive apparatus is needed for many exercises, which is not readily available in this country. But enough examples are given for the use of free weights and pulley systems. The approach can certainly be adapted towards facilities available in practices and gymnasiums.

Throughout the book clear illustrations and applicable flow charts and tables are used. The language is succinct, without unnecessary detail. The book is recommended for students and clinicians involved in orthopaedic and sports rehabilitation. It becomes clear that each patient must be assessed to construct an individual goal-orientated training program. Emphasis is placed on the active involvement of the patient, which leads to a holistic approach to treatment.

G. LAUTERBACH

Bereavement

Handbook of Bereavement: Theory, Research and Intervention. Ed. by Margaret S. Stroebe, Wolfgang Stroebe and Robert O. Hansson. Pp. xii + 546. Hardcover £45, paperback £17.95. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1993. ISBN 0-521-39315-9 hardback, ISBN 0-521-44853-0 paperback.

It is 50 years since the Boston psychiatrist, Erich Lindemann, published his seminal papers on the grief reactions of the survivors of the Coconut Grove fire disaster. Since then, every aspect of personal and collective grief reactions has been examined.

This handbook on bereavement justifies its name in that its 29 chapters cover all aspects of the topic: the phenomenology and measurement of grief, current theories of mourning and bereavement, and the impact of different types of loss. There are six particularly valuable chapters on coping, counselling and therapy.

Careful editing has reduced the ever-present hazard of excessive overlap in any handbook. No less than 46 pages of references provide academic backing for assertions made in the text. A comprehensive author and subject index will assist the reader seeking specific information.

The editors are leading psychologists in Utrecht (The Netherlands) and Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the presentation bears testimony to their editorial experience. Leading researchers are among the 51 contributors to this volume, most from the USA (39), and the rest from Canada (2), the UK (1), The Netherlands (2), Israel (3) and Australia (4).

Notable gaps are any contributions from Africa, South America, and the Far East. Odds are, in these contexts the editors would have had to tap the wealth of anthropological material on mortuary rites attached to death and bereavement. As in the West, unresolved grief often takes on a physical guise with the use of body metaphors, especially when burial rituals and family responsibilities have been neglected. The importance of the cultural significance of death and loss is discussed in chapters 5 and 7.

This handbook will be of inestimable value to local health service and social work professionals on the dynamics and treatment of bereavement: local experience will be needed to flesh out the application of its teachings. Hopefully, the book will trigger local research in this key area of human experience, which, tragically, is all too common at present.

E. S. NASH

Books

If you would like to obtain a book reviewed in this journal, or any other medical book, order it through MASA Publications. Prices quoted in the reviews are subject to change. Contact:

The Book Manager, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430, Ph: (02823) 3205, Fax: (021) 531-4126

BOOKS / BOEKE

Gynaecological pathology

Atlas of Gynecologic Pathology. 2nd ed. By J. Donald Woodruff, Teresita L. Angtuaco and Tim H. Parmley. Pp. 321. Illustrated. \$170.50. New York: Raven Press. 1993. ISBN 0-7817-0056-6.

The designation 'atlas' implies a publication with many pictures and illustrations and, as the authors state in the preface to the first edition, 'as any grown child knows, the quality of a book is in direct proportion to the picture:word ratio'. The first edition was extremely well reviewed. The second edition is superb as an atlas. It is not a comprehensive descriptive volume but rather a pictorial presentation of a wide spectrum of gynaecological pathology with accompanying explanatory diagrams and illustrations from imaging techniques including magnetic resonance imaging. Excellent clinical references and comments are included, and the chapters designated anatomically include embryology and developmental abnormalities, and conclude with a pertinent bibliography.

With the doyen of American gynaecological pathologists, J. Donald Woodruff, as a major contributor, an outstanding publication would have been expected and one is not disappointed. This book is a must for libraries at medical schools and hospitals where gynaecological training is undertaken, and will be of particular value for preparation for postgraduate examinations.

B. BLOCH

Environment and health

Our Planet, Our Health: Report of the WHO Commission on Health and Environment. Pp. 282. SFr. 45. Geneva: World Health Organisation. 1992. ISBN 92-4-156148-3.

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 was an opportunity to reassess the ways the environment interacts with health in development. This report, commissioned by the WHO, served as its contribution to the Conference. The authors argue that the maintenance and improvement of health should be at the centre of concern about the environment and development, and show, with examples, how rarely this is so.

The extent of global challenges and specific sectoral impacts on health and the environment is described. Challenges include population growth, increasing poverty in the developing world and the high level of resource use in the richest countries (50 or more times higher than the poorest country). Macro-economic policy also has a profound influence on the state of health and the environment in all countries, particularly developing countries undergoing structural adjustment.

The chapter on food and agriculture recommends that greater attention be given to food-borne diseases. It points out that the ecological base for feeding the world's population is under stress; agricultural chemicals are widely misused, particularly in developing countries; and research is urgently needed on how to increase food production in the tropics, while reducing tropical diseases and harmful effects on the environment.

The chapter on water, describes the limits on supplies of fresh water and the consequences for health and development. Nearly half the world's population suffers from diseases associated with insufficient or contaminated water. It is recommended that priority be given to water pollution control and making the best use of existing water supplies.

The Commission's energy concern is whether the need for developing countries to increase use of fossil fuel can be met while adverse health effects are reduced. Priorities for national and global action include: emphasis on reducing indoor and urban air pollution. The risk of climatic change from fossil fuel use and wider use of renewal energy sources are discussed.

About human settlements, urbanisation and basic services, the major source of concern is in developing countries where 2 billion people live in life- and health-threatening environments. The Commission recommended that countries study the concepts of the evolving healthy city movement. Intersectoral collaboration at local authority level combined with community participation may reduce many of the adverse impacts of urbanisation.

Environmental issues have global health implications, which include acid precipitation, depletion of the ozone layer by various chemicals, the build-up of greenhouse gases and its impact on the long-term health of the planet; increased disposal of developed countries' hazardous waste in developing countries; and growing pollution of coastal waters. The report lists the problems and provides strategies and recommendations to address them at global and the national level. Among the global objectives is achievement of a sustainable basis for health for all. This demands slowing down population growth, promotion of lifestyles and patterns of consumption among affluent groups and developing countries consistent with ecological sustainability; providing an environment that promotes health; and making everyone aware of their responsibility for health and its environmental basis.

I strongly recommend this book for South Africa during this period of restructuring, as a basis for assisting policy makers and those involved in future planning of health and sectors that impact on health.

Y. E. R. VON SCHIRNDING

Tetanus field guide

Neonatal Tetanus Elimination Field Guide. Technical Paper No 35. Pan American Health Organisation. Pp. v + 37. \$5. Washington: Pan American Health Organisation. 1993. ISBN 92-75-13035-3.

Tetanus neonatorum remains a health problem in southern Africa despite low notification data. This field guide for elimination of neonatal tetanus provides authoritative information on every aspect of the disease. The warning is well taken that there is no chance of global eradication of the disease as there always is a potential for return owing to the nature of the resistant spores. 'Therefore the issue of sustainability (of vaccination) is of paramount importance.'

The epidemiology of tetanus is reviewed in detail and reveals the reason for its low priority rating in South Africa, since most of this country is at low risk. Clinical aspects of neonatal tetanus, including differential diagnosis and management, are well described, with some good illustrations.

Probably the most useful section of the booklet is that dealing with surveillance, which applies not only to health administrators but also to clinical health professionals. Of particular note is the emphasis on 'silent areas' where high-risk conditions prevail but notification is absent.

The publication is well designed and easy to read. It is of global significance and should be prescribed reading for all professionals and administrators of health programmes where Third World conditions prevail. Beyond that, it can be recommended for study as an elementary step towards an understanding of practical epidemiology.

W. E. K. LOENING

MEDICAL BOOKS

Is there a book you want but don't know where to get it? Let MASA Publications find it for you. Prices quoted in the reviews are subject to change. Phone, fax or post the details to:

The Book Manager, Private Bag X1, Pinelands 7430, Ph: (02823) 3205, Fax: (021) 531-4126