



Procedures in General Practice

Edited by John Stuart Brown. 177 pp. Illust. BMJ Publishing Group. 1997. Distributed in Canada by the CMA. \$77.95. (\$64.95, members). ISBN 0-7279-1035-3

Overall rating: Fair
Strengths: Nice illustrations
Weaknesses: Small number of procedures covered; high price
Audience: British general practitioners

There is tremendous need for good, clear and concise instruction in procedures for the general practitioner. It was with disappointment, then, that I realized this little tome could not deliver on its promise "to extend the variety of treatments [I] can offer [my] patients and increase [my] minor surgery skills." There are only 10 chapters devoted to actual procedures. Those procedures that are included are generally well done, such as instruction in skin surgery technique, cryosurgery, banding of hemorrhoids and removal of ingrown toenails.

Many of the illustrations are in colour, and there are numerous drawings and photographs. A lot of the other information, however, is pretty obvious; for example, how a pap smear is done. Too much space is devoted to a discussion of histology, setting up and equipping a treatment room and to medicolegal aspects. The recommendations made to set up a treatment room are rather grand; similar results could be had at a much lower cost.

There are some blatant and important inaccuracies, such as with the issue of countertop sterilizers. The author states that one cannot adequately sterilize wrapped instruments in an autoclave of the sort many general practitioners use. This is simply untrue.

The language is distinctly British (e.g., lignicaine instead of lidocaine). The use of aluminum chloride for he-

mostasis of shave excision lesions is a good tip. However, Canadian physicians may not recognize this as Drysol®.

The book is a compilation of some 15 authors and contains a number of annoying duplications. For example, the need for caution in handling needles and the necessity of hepatitis B immunization are repeated 2 and 3 times.

I would have preferred to see more procedures and less extraneous discussion, especially in a book this size. Substitution of the colour plates with good hand drawings might produce savings that could be passed on to the consumer. If it were not for the exorbitant price, the book could be recommended for the portions that are useful.

Ronald S. Weiss, BSc, MD, CCFP

Assistant Professor
Department of Family Medicine
University of Ottawa
Ottawa, Ont.

MRI of the Abdomen and Pelvis: A Text-Atlas

Edited by Richard C. Semelka, Susan M. Ascher, Caroline Reinhold. 730 pp. Illust. Wiley-Liss, Inc. 1997. \$263.50. ISBN 0-471-16164-0

Overall rating: Excellent
Strengths: Topics well covered; state-of-the-art images
Weaknesses: None
Audience: Radiologists and radiology residents

This is an excellent compendium of MRI images. It is an atlas dedicated entirely to MR imaging, as opposed to most reference books, which cover other imaging modalities such as ultrasound and CT scans.

Being an atlas, it also does not cover extensively the physics of MRI, as would a textbook. There is a brief general introduction to the physics, with emphasis on technical aspects

more specific to body imaging. This is followed by general imaging strategies which could be used as a framework for protocols, adapted for each specific indication and according to available software.

The chapters are well laid out, each covering specific body organ systems (liver, kidneys, spleen, retroperitoneum). Each chapter is well structured with additional technical information, review of the normal anatomy and variants followed by illustrations of various pathological processes.

An image is worth a thousand words; therefore, the text is succinct and images are abundant. The images are of excellent quality and clearly demonstrate features discussed in the text. Key references are available at the end of each chapter.

The lack of correlation with other imaging techniques might represent a weakness of this book. It avoids, however, redundant information already available in other textbooks.

I highly recommend this atlas to complete one's library on state-of-the-art body imaging.

Claudine Michaud, MD

Department of Diagnostic Imaging
Ottawa Civic Hospital
Ottawa, Ont.

Books and other media received

Livres et autres documents reçus

Infectious disease

Mad Cows and Mother's Milk: The Perils of Poor Risk Communication. D. Powell, W. Leiss. 308 pp. Illust. McGill-Queen's U Pr. 1997. \$19.95. ISBN 0-7735-1618-2

Medical education

Medical Comets: Scholarly Contributions by Medical Undergraduates. W.C. Gibson. 282 pp. UBC Alumni Association, University of British Columbia. 1997. ISBN 0-88865-541-X