



Multiple Sclerosis

Edited by D.W. Paty, G.C. Ebers. 572 pp. Illust. Vol. 50 of *Contemporary Neurology Series*. F.A. Davis Company. 1998. \$220.50. ISBN 0-8036-6784-1

Overall rating:	Excellent
Strengths:	Encyclopedic; up-to-date, including newest information on MRI, and basic science and clinical trials; well illustrated
Weaknesses:	Excessive duplication of text and references
Audience:	Clinical neurologists interested in MS; useful reference for anyone caring for MS patients

Multiple sclerosis (MS) directly affects the more than 30 000 Canadians who suffer from the disease and it causes distress for countless family members and friends of those afflicted. The past decade has seen tremendous advances in our understanding of the disease, paralleling the advances in our knowledge of cellular and humeral biology and in the diagnostic capabilities made possible by the development of magnetic resonance technology. New forms of treatment show promise but await the test of time to confirm their true value to the patient with MS.

Paty and Ebers, with the help of current and former colleagues, have taken on the enormous task of trying to encompass all these advances in one volume. They have succeeded without neglecting the traditional aspects of clinical diagnosis and patient care. Both of these distinguished neurologists are known internationally for their research but are best known to the thousands of patients they have cared for with compassion and understanding.

This volume is intentionally laid out so that most of the 11 sections are free-standing; the disadvantage to this is that it causes repetition. Each chapter has its own reference list, some with more than 700 citations. I would have preferred a single set of

references at the end of the book.

The content is excellent. Chapters on Epidemiology and Genetics are concise but complete. Extensive sections on Diagnosis, Clinical Features and Natural History provide a solid basis for subsequent chapters on Management and Assessment of Clinical Trials. The chapter on MRI is so encyclopedic it left me with a bewildering amount of data from enumerable studies. The authors' interpretation of these studies would have been more helpful if one did not have to wade through so many reports, particularly because the studies are also listed in tables. The chapters on Pathology, Virology and Immunology are useful, although the Virology section contained a multitude of information on viruses that have as yet little proven significance for MS. The illustrations and photomicrographs, some in colour, are excellent, and there are many tables. However, the authors did not always use the tables to best advantage and often repeated details of the tables in the text.

The section on Management of Multiple Sclerosis and Interpretation of Clinical Trials is undoubtedly the most useful in the book. The information is largely based on the editors' extensive experience as well as their review of the published data (which now is becoming difficult to assimilate by the average clinician).

Despite the rapid pace of research in this disease, the editors have provided both clinician and researcher with up-to-date material that will serve as a major resource book for anyone interested in MS. I was surprised to learn that several of my patients, who have no medical or scientific background, have read the book. This attests to the writers' ability to communicate medical information understandable to everyone. This book may indeed have an audience

extending beyond the specialists for whom it was intended.

Robert F. Nelson, MD
Director
Multiple Sclerosis Clinic
Ottawa Hospital – General site
Ottawa, Ont.

Books and other media received

Livres et autres documents reçus

Cardiology

New Developments in Cardiac Nuclear Imaging. Edited by A.E. Iskandrian, M.S. Verani. 288 pp. Illust. Futura Publishing. 1998. US\$85. ISBN 0-87993-670-3

Clinical medicine

Atlas of Clinical Skills. M. Afzal Mir. 282 pp. Illust. W.B. Saunders. 1997. ISBN 0-7020-1816-3

Education

Surviving Medical School. R.H. Coombs. 197 pp. Sage Publications. 1998. US\$23.50. ISBN 0-7619-0529-4

History

History of the Disorders of Cardiac Rhythm. Second revised and updated printing. B. Lüderitz. 171 pp. Illust. Futura Publishing. 1998. US\$60. ISBN 0-87993-606-1

Medicolegal

A Practical Guide to Mental Health, Capacity and Consent Law of Ontario. Edited by Hy Bloom, Michael Bay. 620 pp. Carswell. 1996. \$90. ISBN 0-459-55396-8

Oncology

Tumor Marker Protocols. Edited by M. Hanausek, Z. Walaszek. 500 pp. Illust. Vol. 14 of *Methods in Molecular Medicine*™ Series. Humana Press. 1998. ISBN 0-89603-380-5