

Comprehensive Pediatrics. Robert L. Summitt (ed). C.V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1990, 1296 pp, price not stated. ISBN 0801651875.

This is a multi-authored textbook covering the entirety of the field of pediatrics. The word *comprehensive* in the title better describes the range of subjects—from genetics to adolescent medicine—than the depth of coverage on each topic. The discussion of the mucocutaneous lymph node syndrome (Kawasaki's disease), for example, is covered on only one page. Consequently, this book appears more suited to the medical student or reader seeking an overview of a broad range of subjects than to the clinician looking for a reference on specific patient management problems.

The presentation is done well. In spite of the many contributors, there is a consistency of style and organization in each chapter, with a readable narrative in a concise clinical format. For specific entries the sections are subdivided along traditional lines into paragraphs on etiology, clinical manifestations, diagnosis, and treatment. Charts, tables, and photographs are offered sparingly, but when included, are pertinent and helpful. A very useful aid, particularly to students, is a summation of key points at the end of each chapter, which not only serves as a recall device, but also emphasizes those points the authors selected as most important.

The editor has demonstrated an emphasis on clinical orientation in his selection and weighting of topics. Chapters on inborn errors of metabolism and child psychiatry are of equal length; the latter is particularly well done, with descriptions of many common disorders handled in an easily referenced semi-outline form. There are a large section on genetics and genetic counseling, a readable section on fluid and electrolyte homeostasis with clinical problem management examples, a large section on infectious diseases, and the standard inclusion of chapters arranged by organ system covering cardiology, the respiratory system, and so forth.

There are a compilation of normal pediatric laboratory values and a few appended tables for surface area and acid-base calculations. A notable omission is the lack of any drug formula or dosage information. References for further reading are provided at the ends of chapters and contain abbreviated, selected listings of review-type articles.

In summary, this book seems best suited to the student reader and in this regard is well organized, comprehensive but concise, and easily readable. Reiteration of key points at the end of each section provides an excellent learning tool.

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Geriatric Medicine for the House Officer. Kim Goldenberg, Alice Faryna. Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, 1990, 350 pp, \$16.95 (paper). ISBN 0-683-03626-2.

The field of clinical geriatrics has grown dramatically in the past 20 years, in part reflecting the demographics of our aging population. Although there is increased recognition that physicians need to become more knowledgeable about the care of the elderly, most US medical schools still do not require rotations in gerontology or geriatrics. One can only hope that this unfortunate educational ageism will soon change. The latest addition to the successful Books for the House Officer Series represents one small positive step in this direction.

The editors of this well-written, concise, and practical reference espouse a patient-centered approach to clinical geriatrics. The text is organized into five major sections that cover general problems in geriatric care, (organ) system-related problems, neuromuscular problems (impacting on functional status), psychosocial problems, and interdisciplinary issues. The chapters on systems pathology helpfully review the effects of the aging process on anatomy and physiology and focus on selected clinical problems.

A common format for organic disorders is employed that includes a

discussion of epidemiology, etiology, history, physical examination, diagnostic tests, differential diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and caveats. The following important issues are covered: the variable presentation of disease processes in the elderly; the interpretation of clinical symptoms, signs, and test results; drug therapy and polypharmacy; assessment of cognitive and functional status; physical medicine and rehabilitation; caring for families of Alzheimer's patients; alternatives to institutionalization; and ethical and legal issues.

In general, the editors have done a marvelous job of bringing together the variety of disciplines and perspectives represented by the 35 contributing authors (all, with one exception, are faculty at the Wright State University of Medicine). There are many valuable diagnostic and therapeutic pearls of clinical wisdom scattered throughout the text. These are highlighted through the liberal use of underlining, tables, and lists of key points to remember. Interested readers will greatly appreciate the excellent and up-to-date suggested readings at the end of each chapter.

The usual problems of multi-authored texts are only occasionally seen. For example, although there is some repetitiousness in the coverage of topics (dementia is discussed in several chapters) and a few idiosyncratic choices in the way topics are presented (colon cancer is discussed in the chapter on gastrointestinal problems rather than the one on cancer management), these are relatively minor distractions. More to the point, this reviewer would hope that future editions of this book will cover in greater detail such important topics as geriatric emergencies, the management of death and dying, hospice care, organ donation, unresolved grief and anniversary reactions, nutrition and drug interactions, and the role of home visits.

In summary, *Geriatric Medicine for the House Officer* succeeds admirably in its goal to present a practical biopsychosocial and interdisciplinary approach to clinical geriatrics. It should be required reading for all

medical students, residents, and fellows who care for senior citizens. Busy primary care physicians and geriatricians will also find this book to be a helpful quick reference guide for selected clinical problems (as well as a good review text for board certification examinations). The price is right—good things continue to come in small packages!

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Advanced Pediatric Life Support. *APLS Joint Task Force, Martha Bushore, Gary Fleisher, James Seidel, David Wagner. The American Academy of Pediatrics and The American College of Emergency Physicians. Elk Grove Village, Illinois, and Dallas, Texas. 1989, 209 pp (price not available), (paper). ISBN 0-910761-23-X.*

Recent medical advances have produced an overall decline in pediatric mortality; however, trauma remains the leading cause of death for children and adolescents. Since cardiopulmonary failure and shock may result from traumatic injuries, it is vital that those caring for critically ill and injured young patients be trained in the principles of pediatric emergency medicine and resuscitation.

This paperback text was developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Emergency Physicians for use in conjunction with a national course in Advanced Pediatric Life Support. The course and this student manual are designed to provide a core of pediatric emergency medicine management protocols for health providers treating children in emergency settings. The recommendations made represent a consensus of participating physicians and various other sources, but are not intended to indicate an exclusive course of treatment, and the authors recognize the existence of regional variations.

The book is divided into five sec-

tions. Section I addresses cardiopulmonary support and offers a straightforward approach to evaluating, resuscitating and supporting the seriously ill child. Specific discussions follow regarding respiratory distress, shock, dysrhythmias, and congestive heart failure. Section II covers traumatic emergencies in general with an emphasis on trauma to the chest, abdomen, head, and spinal cord. Thermal and electrical burns are also described as well as the management of various forms of child abuse. Section III discusses environmental emergencies such as ingestions, inhalations, envenomation, submersions, and exposures to extreme temperatures. Section IV provides a succinct description of neonatal resuscitation. Section V focuses on specific life-threatening diseases characterized by altered levels of consciousness: diabetic ketoacidosis, meningitis, Reye's syndrome, and status epilepticus.

Most chapters are organized with learning objectives presented first, followed by clinically relevant discussions of pathophysiology, assessment, and management. Each section and chapters are written to be free-standing entities; therefore, there are a certain number of redundancies throughout the book.

This manual makes a useful quick reference for health providers treating pediatric emergencies on a regular basis. While not mandatory, it is probably of greatest value when an individual has had an opportunity to take the course for which the book was developed.

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The Right Test—A Physician's Guide to Laboratory Medicine. *Carl E. Speicher. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1989, 192 pp, \$19.50 (paper). ISBN 0-7216-3065-0.*

The efficient use of the clinical laboratory is a goal shared by most practicing physicians. This soft-cover manual readily facilitates the successful pursuit of that goal on a day-to-

day basis. The author elected to organize the book in a problem-oriented fashion so that the clinician would find a complete laboratory approach to a problem rather than need to reference individual laboratory tests that may or may not be optimal in the evaluation of a particular presentation.

A typical clinical situation is first presented to the reader (anemia, diabetes, hepatitis, cholesterol screening, among many); thereafter, appropriate tests are recommended with an extensive commentary regarding the test's strengths, weaknesses, and false-positive or false-negative rates, together with its optimum use as well as a current discussion of recent changes in a test's clinical value.

The manual demonstrates many strengths, one of which is its concise presentation of over 50 clinical areas involving the use of laboratory medicine. The practitioner will without doubt find in this book nicely referenced assistance to the daily practice of medicine—an excellent table of contents and index format included. Normal laboratory values (conventional and international units) are conveniently located on the inside covers.

The Right Test appears to be an extremely practical manual that anyone dealing in areas of common medical problems (students, residents, and practitioners) will find useful every day. Since it is written in a style that reads quickly, the same audience will find it an effective review source on laboratory medicine.

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Dennen's Forceps Deliveries (2nd edition). *Philip C. Dennen. F.A. Davis Company, Philadelphia, 1989, 201 pp, \$35. ISBN 0-8036-2511-1.*

This text is an attempt to illustrate "in an encyclopedic way the intricacies of obstetrical forceps usage." The text does have strengths presenting step-by-step details of forceps de-

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liveries. Many practical suggestions are given that are particularly useful to the student and helpful as a review for the clinician. The content is highly relevant to family physicians providing obstetric care. It is easy to read and understand, and the illustrations are excellent.

There are, however, disadvantages to the author's style. There are no concise outlines for the reader desiring an efficient review. Although a bibliography is provided, it is not referenced in the text. One would find it difficult to pursue in more detail information that would support the author's conclusions. It is the author's firm belief that forceps deliveries give fetal and maternal results that equal if not exceed those of spontaneous vertex delivery. I doubt that this view will be universally held among his readers. Without the text being referenced, one is not able to find the data on which the author bases these statements. Less than two pages are given to the vacuum extractor, with only one sentence commenting on the silastic obstetrical vacuum cup.

The organization of the text into chapters based on specific techniques and procedures used for specific fetal presentations is helpful. The text has the comfortable style of a teacher speaking to his student, but it is not so thorough or so well referenced as *Modern Instrumental Delivery* by J.P. O'Grady (Williams & Wilkins, Baltimore, 1988, ISBN 0-683-06632-3). Overall, it is a very useful addition to the reading list and library of family physicians providing obstetrical care.

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Manual of Medical Therapeutics (26th edition). William Claiborne Dungan, Michael L. Ridner (eds). Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1989, 512 pp, \$21 (paper). ISBN 0-316-92400-8.

I had the pleasure of writing the book review for this journal when the

24th edition of this book was published. I am now doing the book review for the 26th edition. "The Washington Manual" has been widely acclaimed as the house staff's and medical student's "little Bible" for many years. It still is so. It was expanded from 469 pages to 512 pages and still contains concise, readily useful and applicable information. It would make for a nice pocket manual if it could only be made to fit in most white laboratory coats of our house staff.

The book now consists of 24 easily readable chapters, starting with general care of the patient; basic concepts in nutrition, fluid, and electrolyte management; diagnosis and treatment of hypertension; and principles in the management of ischemic heart disease, myocardial and valvular heart disease, and cardiac arrhythmias, as well as basics of advanced cardiac life support. One can also read about acute respiratory failure, pulmonary and gastroenterologic disorders of hemostasis, anemia and transfusion therapy, medical management of malignant disease, diabetes mellitus, and other relevant endocrine and lipid disorders. The topic of arthritis and rheumatologic diseases is again well covered as are neurologic and medical emergencies.

The pages tend to stick, and loosen after paging through the ring binder, but that is only a minor inconvenience.

The authors have managed to keep the discussions concise and pertinent. The appendices are also quite practical including those on drug interactions, immunizations, commonly described medications, and the dosage adjustments of drugs with renal failure.

Again this manual has managed to maintain its credibility and worthiness. It can again be recommended for every medical student and house officer (including family practice residents) for use in both the inpatient and outpatient settings.

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Somewhere
 a child lies crying

Somewhere
 an old man shivers
 in the dark

Somewhere
 a family's dreams
 burn to the ground

Somewhere
 somebody needs
 help.

Contact your
 local chapter.



American
 Red Cross

Because somewhere
 is closer than you think.