

BOOKS REVIEWED

IMMUNE-MEDIATED NEUROMUSCULAR DISEASES. VOLUME 26. FRONTIERS OF NEUROLOGY AND NEUROSCIENCE. 2009. Edited by R. Pourmand. Published by Karger, Basel. 170 pages. C\$220 approx.

Rated 

This is a short text summarizing current clinical information and treatment options in selected neuromuscular disorders with an immune-mediated etiology. Each chapter is put together by acknowledged experts: acute neuropathies, chronic neuropathies (including CIDP), nonsystemic vacuolitic neuropathy, other 'dysimmune' neuropathies, autonomic ganglionopathy, myasthenia gravis, Lambert-Eaton myasthenic syndrome, idiopathic inflammatory myopathies and stiff person syndrome. Overall the chapters are well written, comprehensive and well referenced. The chapters are of variable length. While some are fairly brief, overall these chapters in essence represent up-to-date review articles on the conditions in question. This is very welcome for these difficult clinical problems. For example, having two chapters on MG, one on MG with anti-AchR antibodies, and another with MG and anti-MuSK or no antibodies, is very welcome in this evolving field. With the exception of the vacuolitis and myositis chapters, the book does not emphasize nerve or muscle pathology and there are limited numbers of Figures. Regrettably a number of therapeutic decisions overall in these conditions are less evidence-based than they should be—a problem the authors deal with. It is difficult to know what to recommend in the absence of evidence, e.g. treatment of acute lumbosacral plexopathy. Overall, the text is an excellent up-to-date review in an area where there are relatively few authoritative articles covering a number of these conditions, particularly in regards to therapy.

This text provides an excellent source that would be useful for senior neurology residents, general neurologists and for neuromuscular specialists interested in updates in their fields.

*Douglas W. Zochodne
Calgary, Alberta, Canada*

HANDBOOK OF CEREBROVASCULAR DISEASE AND NEUROINTERVENTIONAL TECHNIQUE. 2009. By Mark R. Harrigan, John P. Deveikis. Published by Humana Press. 743 pages. C\$200 approx.

Rated 

The field of Endovascular Surgical Neuroradiology (aka Interventional Neuroradiology, Endovascular Neurosurgery, and Interventional Neurology) is perhaps the most rapidly advancing field in medicine. Greater understanding of cerebrovascular diseases as well as advances in device technology has enabled the interventionalist to treat an increasing number of cerebrovascular diseases. Endovascular techniques, in fact, have become the preferred method of therapy for many of these conditions. With such rapid

advancement, it has been difficult to compile a comprehensive resource for students and practitioners.

The Handbook of Cerebrovascular Disease and Neuro-interventional Technique by Mark R. Harrigan and John P. Deveikis attempts to be this resource. The book is intentionally presented in a simplistic form. The major points are presented in bullet statements, containing the critical information that would be required by an interventionalist. By doing so, the authors have been able to present a thorough review of the field in a reasonably sized handbook.

The book begins with a thorough review of the relevant vascular anatomy of the intracranial, extracranial and spinal circulation. This can be a monumental task in and of itself, considering the wide variety of normal variations and anomalies that can be seen. The authors have achieved this successfully, with several tables and clear figures to allow easy illustration. Most importantly, the authors have been able to cover not only the most common variations and anomalies, but have placed emphasis on those that are especially important to the successful outcome of cerebrovascular cases. This allows those relatively new to angiography to learn the critical anatomy that will allow them to better avoid potential complications. Of particular note, the discussion of the cerebral venous system and spinal arterial anatomy is extremely useful, as this is information that is hard to find in simplified form in many texts. The initial section concludes with descriptions of the performance of cerebral and spinal angiography as well as discussion of the setting up of a neurovascular lab. Although technique is highly variable between centers, the authors present a safe method and also offer tips on how to navigate difficult anatomy, which is again helpful for novice angiographers.

The book then moves onto sections on interventional techniques followed by specific disease states. The authors again provide a general approach, acknowledging that a variety of techniques and choices of devices are available and vary depending upon the operator (even amongst themselves!). The practical tips again provided are useful and safe, which is useful for individuals starting in the field. The text is also up-to-date with many of the more recently released devices, such as the Penumbra systems for stroke. In the specific disease states section, more detailed discussion of the specific disease states is provided, with some elaboration of the techniques as it applies to specific situations. These discussions focus on the practical knowledge of the literature required for management of patients, while also highlighting some of the controversies. One limitation is the limited amount of figures, especially in the Intervention section. That being said, the figures provided are quite useful and are a useful adjunct to the descriptions given in the text.

As a whole, this book is a welcome addition to the literature of Endovascular Surgical Neuroradiology. It provides a practical reference with useful information while not overwhelming the reader with unnecessary detail. Both residents and fellows early in their training as well as experienced angiographers will find this text valuable as a reference.

*Muhammad Shazam Hussain
Cleveland, Ohio, USA*