

The strength of this book lies in presenting the extensive experience of two neurosurgeons stepped in the surgery of the lumbar spine. However, with the development of ever more expensive and extensive instrumentation and the utilization of sophisticated spinal neuronavigational techniques, one wonders whether this is not time for some reflection. Which of the many operative and instrumentation techniques available for spinal disorders provide the best long-term outcome for patients? Future textbooks on lumbar spine surgery would clearly be benefited by information provided by well-done, multicentred controlled trials.

This book would be most useful to neurosurgeons and neurosurgery residents interested in the management of complex disorders of the adult lumbar spine.

*Rolando F. DelMaestro
Montreal, Quebec*

THE NEUROLOGICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PRETERM AND FULL TERM NEWBORN INFANT (CLINICS IN DEVELOPMENTAL MEDICINE No. 148). 2nd Edition. 1999. By Lilly M.S. Dubowitz, Victor Dubowitz, Eugenio Mercuri. Published by MacKeith Press; Distributed by Cambridge University Press. 155 pages. C\$83.93 approx.

This is the second edition of a practical clinical guide to the neurological examination of the newborn, the first edition of which has long been regarded as a classic text by pediatric neurologists, neonatologists and pediatricians. The text is organized such that the first two chapters review the historical background and provide a rationale for components of the clinical neurological examination of the newborn. The next two chapters outline in detail the neurological assessment of normal preterm and term newborns in detail, alerting the reader to potential pitfalls in the examination related to maturational changes in the developing nervous system. Subsequently, the authors combine several aspects of the examination into an "optimality score" which permits some quantification of the neurological evaluation of the term newborn. This scoring system should be of great interest to clinical researchers for incorporation into study designs when serial examinations or comparison between groups of infants are required. Another chapter is devoted to modifications of the detailed neurological examination to create a brief, simplified version which is suitable for use by less experienced staff and for mass screening programs. The authors illustrate how this scheme has been applied to study infants in Bangkok and elsewhere in Thailand. A set of loose scoring sheets of the detailed Hammersmith Newborn Neurological Examination and the modified shortened version are provided for ease of reproduction and to encourage clinical use by the reader. Finally, there is a large new section in the second edition which correlates the clinical patterns of neurological findings with neuroimaging data in preterm and term newborns with specific brain lesions.

In general, the second edition of this text exceeds the high expectations set by the earlier version in terms of its practical clinical approach and the clear readable style. The numerous illustrations provide an unequalled step-by-step visual guide to performing the newborn neurological examination and reflect a lifetime of experience and dedication by the authors. In the current climate of increasing reliance on complex technologies for study of the central nervous system, it is refreshing to be reminded about the

major importance of the clinical neurological examination in the newborn.

*Alan Hill
Vancouver, British Columbia*

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND RELATED DISORDERS ANNUAL. 2000. Edited by Serge Gauthier, and Jeffery L. Cummings. Published by Martin Dunitz Ltd. 255 pages. C\$102.00 approx.

The field of dementia continues to grow at a substantially rapid rate. This growth in knowledge permeates all aspects of this field, from basic science to patient care. With such a rapid rate of growth it is imperative to put new information in perspective. The "Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Annual" serves an important purpose, in summarizing the most current information on various types of dementias and provides some perspective in basic research, as well as clinical care. There are 11 chapters, each written by individuals with expertise in the field. These chapters are comprehensive for the range of new advances, and include information on: genetics of Alzheimer's disease, chromosome 17 and frontotemporal dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, parkinsonism with dementia, subcortical vascular dementia, minimal cognitive impairment, functional aspects of dementia, neuropsychiatric manifestations of dementia, cholinesterase inhibitors in the treatment of dementia, hormonal therapies for Alzheimer's disease, and anti-inflammatory therapy for Alzheimer's disease. One of the major strengths of this book is that it is edited by two individuals with keen understanding of dementias. Individual chapters are concise, thorough, and have a comprehensive set of references. Not surprisingly, given that all aspects of dementia are in the developmental stages, some of the new data are controversial in their application. The search for genetic aspects of dementia will continue and, potentially, will lead to treatment of these diseases. Clinical criteria for diagnosis of various dementias and their treatments will undoubtedly continue to be refined, but for now, this book serves as an excellent summary of many aspects of dementias to date. Some of the chapters, however, have perspectives that do not coincide with others. It would have been helpful for the editors to put some of this information in context for readers without a deep sense of present controversies. Nonetheless, the present effort is a starting point for future yearbooks on discussions and reviews on many aspects of these complex and intellectually challenging diseases.

This book should be of interest to basic scientists, clinicians, nurses, and other health care providers, particularly those involved in dementias.

*Sultan Darvesh
Halifax, Nova Scotia*

PATHOLOGY OF SKELETAL MUSCLE. Second Edition. 2001. By Stirling Carpenter, George Karpati. Published by Oxford University Press. 662 pages. C\$458.64 approx.

This is the second edition of this text and the authors have again produced a valuable and attractive reference and guide for all of those interested in the diagnostic pathology of skeletal muscle. The book is divided into two major sections: the first describes the