

Book Reviews

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Emergencies in Clinical Medicine, ed by H. J. Kennedy, Oxford, Blackwell Scientific, 1985, 488 pp, price not given.

The first edition of this text addresses the subject of those medical emergencies frequently encountered by house officers, internists, and emergency physicians in a general hospital emergency department. The book is divided into five major sections. The first four deal with acute cardiovascular, respiratory, neurologic, and gastrointestinal entities. The fifth, a miscellaneous section, endeavors to address the more common endocrine, renal, hematologic, toxicologic, psychiatric, and infectious emergencies. The format of the text is derived from a lecture series presented to the junior physicians at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford, England.

As the text is reviewed, two major areas of omission are evident. Trauma, a major cause of mortality and morbidity, is not discussed. Also, the recent trend toward greater use of the emergency facility for nonemergent "walk-in" problems by a population that is increasingly mobile or transient has not been addressed. However, these omissions are intentional and serve to highlight the authors' basic thrust: a consideration of the *medical* emergency.

Sections dealing with specific emergent processes are preceded by a useful consideration of the more common clinical presentations. Coma, breathlessness, chest pain, abdominal pain, and headache are considered with regard to common historical, examination, and laboratory features, allowing distinction to be drawn among the various entities in the common differential. Initially indicated therapies are outlined.

In their subsequent consideration of more specific entities, the authors pay detailed attention to physiology, etiology, and therapy not only as they relate to the acute presentation but as they relate to the subsequent in-hospital course and management. Current clinical controversies and newer therapies are addressed in relevant fashion. Ample references are provided. As one reads through the various sections, whether dealing with myocardial infarction, stroke, pneumonia, or respiratory failure, one is impressed by the careful attention paid to both the theoretical and practical aspects of management and by the

straightforward, concise manner in which this is presented.

Emergencies in Clinical Medicine is not intended to serve as an extensive treatise on the full range of medical diseases encountered in the emergency department. Rather, the authors have chosen to address primarily the circumscribed area of the medical emergency and have done so accurately, informatively, and admirably. Neither is this text a primer, but a supplement for physicians currently knowledgeable in those areas of acute medicine addressed. While this book will be most used and appreciated by medical house officers, generalists, and emergency department physicians involved in the treatment of acute medical illness, its utility will extend to all physicians who have occasion to deal with the unexpected "turn for the worse" in otherwise nonemergent and perhaps nonmedical settings.

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Rob and Smith's Operative Surgery: Urology, ed by Hugh Dudley, David Carter, and consultant editor W. Scott McDougal, St. Louis, CV Mosby, 1986, 778 pp, price not given.

This fourth edition represents the work of 67 internationally respected authors. The breadth of coverage, including a wide array of urologic problems, is fairly complete. Each chapter provides a brief introduction, followed by an illustrated step-by-step description of the surgical procedure. Sections describing indications, preoperative and postoperative care, and potential complications are, at times, included. In many cases, by design of the editor, the only technique described for a procedure is the one specifically preferred by the author of that chapter. While alternative techniques might have been included more regularly, the preexisting credibility of the contributor in each instance reduces the significance of such exclusions.

This volume has been expanded from the previous editions and is meant to serve as a complete reference

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source of urologic surgical techniques for the practicing urologist. However, open surgical procedures are covered more than endoscopic techniques. For example, there are several fairly extensive chapters about the open surgical management of renal and ureteral calculi. As most of those operations have now been relegated to historical interest, chapters dealing with ureteroscopy or extracorporeal lithotripsy are conspicuously absent from this edition. Percutaneous techniques are given cursory coverage.

In some chapters, only the major steps of a technique are illustrated, leaving out more subtle but at times equally important details of the procedure. While this would be acceptable as a review for the practicing urologist, a urologic surgical trainee might find such abbreviated descriptions to be of less value.

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