Book Reviews

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Cardiotonic Drugs: A Clinical Survey, edited by Carl V. Leier (Dekker).

Cardiotonic drugs are pharmacologic agents that exert a positive inotropic effect on the myocardium and increase cardiac output. These drugs have been in clinical use since digitalis was discovered more than 200 years ago. A number of these agents have undergone laboratory and clinical investigation during the past two decades, but many drugs were considered unacceptable because of lack of efficacy or untoward side effects. Carl Leier, MD, from Ohio State University, has assembled an extremely comprehensive review of cardiotonic drugs as related to animal and human studies, pharmacology, dosage, side effects, and clinical usefulness. The chapter entitled "Measurement of Myocardial Inotropy" may be useful to the researcher as well as the clinician in understanding the value and limitations of tests by which myocardial performance is measured. The chapter about digitalis by Richard P. Lewis, MD, is one of the best reviews written on the subject. Leier's section dealing with acute inotropic support is the most clearly written and clinically useful chapter in the book. Unfortunately, a large portion of the volume is devoted to reviewing the numerous inotropic agents that have not proved to be clinically useful and are of historical interest only. *Cardiotonic Drugs* is quite technical and is not recommended for the student or medical resident. It may, however, be of interest to cardiologists, cardiac surgeons, anesthesiologists, cardiovascular pharmacologists, and researchers.

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Tendon Surgery in the Hand, edited by James M. Hunter, Lawrence H. Schnieder, and Evelyn J. Mackin (Mosby).

This book originated from the 1984 Philadelphia Tendon Symposium, called "Another Decade of Tendon Surgery." It is a comprehensive, up-to-date volume bringing together 111 contributors, including most of the leaders in the field. In many instances, the authors were the ones who developed the particular techniques, made some advancement or discovery, or stressed a certain fundamental principle. As such, the volume is certainly authoritative.

The work is organized into nine sections (75 chapters, 46 of which deal mainly with the flexor tendons). The first part covers the anatomy, blood supply, nutrition, and healing of tendons. The basic research work is presented by the primary investigators themselves. The remaining sections cover acute flexor tendon injuries, tendon grafts, tenolysis, flexor tendon reconstruction, extensor tendons, rheumatoid arthritis, and tendon transfers. The final section contains transcripts of the panel discussions held during the symposium.

Often, different conflicting aspects of the same topic are covered in different chapters by various authors each presenting his or her own work. Examples include intrinsic and extrinsic factors in tendon nutrition, active and passive motion following flexor tendon repair, techniques of tenolysis, and grafting through an intact superficialis tendon. This is an effective way of presenting both sides of a topic, giving the reader the opportunity to evaluate the evidence and make his or her own judgment.

Photographs and drawings are outstanding. In general, the chapters are well organized. The bibliographies are complete.

Rehabilitation following surgery is stressed, as it should be, with four chapters and three panel discussions devoted primarily to that topic. Yet there is little coverage of conventional one-stage flexor tendon grafting; perhaps this is because results of primary repair are better than grafts. On the other hand, there is extensive coverage of flexor reconstruction by means of the two-stage tendon grafting technique. Also covered is the ongoing experimental and clinical work on long-term artificial tendon prosthesis. The chapters by Iselin dealing with treatment of boutonniere and mallet deformities, however, could be improved by illustrations. Indications and techniques of conventional one-stage flexor tendon grafting are barely covered.

Tendon Surgery in the Hand is must reading for all serious students of tendon surgery. The editors are to be congratulated and the writers thanked for bringing this superb work to us.

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