

If you would like to review books for ACNR, please contact Andrew Lerner, Book Review Editor, c/o AdvancesinCNR@aol.com

The Effective Management of Headache

Whether or not one believes headache to be a symptom best dealt with by neurologists, or even a neurological illness, virtually every neurologist in the country sees, willy-nilly, many complaining of this problem, and hence strives to achieve the effective management of headache. To what extent can this slim volume, one of a series of titles published as "UK Key Advances in Clinical Practice Series 2000," assist in the fulfilment of this goal?

The text is divided into two sections: "Evidence and Assessment," and "Evidence and Treatment." From the perspective of this reviewer, the latter is the more rewarding reading, if, that is, one is wishing to learn about migraine, rather than headache per se. There are chapters dealing with prophylaxis, the relative merits of the triptans (prior to the licensing of almotriptan), migraine in women and children; but there is little on the more prevalent problem of tension-type headaches. Indeed, the longest entries in the index for tension-type headache relate to acupuncture and spinal manipulation, parts of a chapter devoted to complementary therapies. For those who believe that prescribing pills may not be the most appropriate response to this clinical problem, this carefully argued chapter makes particularly interesting reading.

Less satisfying is the "Evidence and Assessment" section. Chapter titles which particularly caught my eye, such as "When to refer: a primary care perspective" and "Psychiatric perspectives on headache," failed to deliver. The former argues that much can be achieved within the primary health care team prior to referral, using a step by step approach to

treatment. Undoubtedly true, but seldom coinciding with my experience, most patients being referred to my clinic after a single GP consultation and after trying only a single analgesic. Moreover, the indication for referral advocated here seems to be intuition. The latter chapter is clear that psychological factors are important in the aetiology and maintenance of headache in some patients, but left me with no clear idea of how frequently, or of how to identify and manage them (referral to a psychiatrist, or a pain psychologist?).

Maybe I began this book with inappropriate expectations, perhaps due to the title. I would have liked an airing of the thorny debate on the place, if any, of CT scanning in patients with tension-type headache. Some consultants condemn such a practice as almost sinful, because of the extremely remote possibility of finding pathology, and because of the risk of reinforcing patients' erroneous belief in serious underlying pathology (most patients in my experience seem to expect this, and want a scan); whereas others routinely perform scans in the hope of allaying patient fears, however unlikely pathology seems on clinical grounds, and to achieve closure of the patient episode. Is it known whether patients fare better, or reattend less, if scanned?

For those interested in this book, ask your librarian: apparently every hospital library in the UK has been provided with a copy, courtesy of the Migraine Trust.

AJ Lerner, WCNN, Liverpool



Edited by: Peter J Goadsby, Andrew J Dowson, Andrew Miles
 Publisher: Aesculapius Medical Press, 1999
 Pages: 164
 ISBN No: 1-903044-03-0
 Price: £19.99

Essential Neurology

I bought this book to use in the preparation for my Final Medical examinations and found it to be extremely useful. Unlike other Neurology textbooks offering only key information, Essential Neurology lays out core information in a user-friendly manner which is always accompanied by key details and points of discussion. This allowed me to firmly grasp important information of which I previously had little understanding, without spending hours toiling through the irrelevant detail encountered in voluminous Neurology textbooks.

The book divides the subject of Neurology into 13 chapters of approximately equal size, which correlate with the 13 key areas in Neurology. Each chapter is further divided into conditions occurring under that category. The information is systematically presented, allowing a clear mental picture of the role of the particular conditions discussed in the vast framework of neurology. Each condition is subdivided once again into causes, clinical features, treatment and prognosis, with particular emphasis on the clinical picture and a holistic approach to care. This allows the reader to understand the clinical manifestations very clearly, and appreciate that treatment consists of focusing on all areas affected. Important areas of Neurology such as Paraplegia and Epilepsy are reserved their own chapters and the book's systematic approach is illustrated in its step-

wise discussion of Nerve Root, Nerve plexus and Peripheral nerve lesions in the chapter of the same name.

The art of neurology lies very much in the correct assembly of symptom and sign 'parts' to form the architecture of the diagnosis. In my view the book would become even more appealing if each chapter contained a sample case history relating to its content, showing how the clinical features are used to formulate the diagnosis. Another feature that would have made Essential Neurology invaluable during my pre-exam days is a brief summary box at the end of each chapter reiterating the crucial fundamental concepts that one could simply glance over.

The style of the author is precise and crisp with bullet points used to convey key factual details and explanations offered in full prose. All neurological concepts are beautifully discussed. A diagrammatic approach parallels a written explanation of each concept, and the book's margins are filled with pictorial representations and aides de memoirs closely following the text. This not only makes the read more interesting and appealing, but it also allows constant consolidation of the knowledge gained from the text.

Mithu Mukherjee, Cambridge



Edited by: I.M.S. Wilkinson, 3rd Edition
 Publisher: Blackwell Science.
 Pages: 248 pp
 Price: £20.95

SAVE ON NEUROLOGY BOOK PRICES WITH LWW & ACNR



Parkinson's Disease and Movement Disorders, Fourth Edition

Joseph J. Jankovic, MD & Eduardo Tolosa, MD.

This multi-authored textbook gives detailed information about the basic science and clinical factors affecting diagnosis and management of Parkinson's and other movement disorders. Now in its Fourth Edition, the book continues to provide an internationally renowned array of expert contributors along with reliable and clinically essential perspectives.

FEATURES: - Addresses common and rare movement disorders
 - Includes basic science and clinical information.

ISBN: 0-7817-3515-7 • October 2002 • Hardback

Normal Retail Price: £81.00

ACNR Price: £72.90



Clinical Electromyography Nerve Conduction Studies, Third Edition

Shin J. Oh MD.

Established as a staple reference in the EMG laboratory, this book (now in its revised and updated Third Edition) gives encyclopaedic coverage of current nerve conduction techniques and their clinical uses.

Written by a world-renowned authority, the book includes a new chapter on special nerve conduction techniques, coverage of recent developments (such as electromyographic diagnosis of immunologically mediated neuropathies) and over 500 illustrations.

ISBN: 0-7817-3681-1 • November 2002 • Paperback

Normal Retail Price: £100.00

ACNR Price: £90.00



Current Opinion in Neurology

www.co-neurology.com

Editor: Richard SJ Frackowiak
 Deputy Editor: Anne B Young

Current Opinion distills the massive amount of primary literature into reliable, concise and thoughtful analyses written by respected opinion leaders. The entire discipline is covered within structured sections so that you receive a full update on all aspects of neurology every year.

Visit WWW.CO-NEUROLOGY.COM FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND TO CHECK OUT A SAMPLE ISSUE.

- ISSN - 1350-7540
- individual subscription \$299(6 issues per year) includes online access.



To order any of the above publications or any other Lippincott Williams Et Wilkins publications email ACNR Bookservice at ACNRbooks@aol.com or fax 0131 313 1110

