

Book Review

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Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Pearls

Edited by Lennard

Hanley & Belfus: \$45.00, ISBN 1 56053 455 9

This 225 page paperback is part of the tried and tested Pearl Series[®] which aims to stimulate the reader with a clinical scenario consisting of a general history and physical examination findings followed by results of pertinent investigations and then poses questions regarding diagnosis, management or both. The answer is given on the following page often with a differential diagnosis and supplemented by a concise discussion. Key points are reinforced with a handful of 'Clinical Pearls' and a list of references derived from journals and authoritative medical texts.

The book consists of 85 such cases, most of which are challenging, and a broad range of disciplines are featured – spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, electrodiagnosis, inflammatory and soft tissue rheumatology, pharmacology, orthopaedics, neurology – the common theme being rehabilitation.

The format is reminiscent of case presentations and discussions given at hospital grand rounds. There is a fair amount of general medicine to refresh the mind of the rehabilitation physician. The in-depth discussions do not always offer evidence based judgements but give the opinions of the contributing authors drawn from a list of 16 clinicians all of whom are involved in physical medicine and rehabilitation.

The book is aimed at trainees in rehabilitation but will be useful to doctors training in specialties which come into contact with rehabilitation. The book itself is reasonably

easy to read but some cases require more thought than others and often one has to read the laboratory and electrodiagnostic data a couple of times to assimilate the information in the format it is presented in. The index is comprehensive and easy to use.

The reproduction of clinical images is reasonable (all in black and white) as are X-rays and MR scans. However, not all the radiological images contain enough explanatory information to help the reader with interpretation.

A few cases revolve around the clinical effects of commonly used medications and made for interesting reading. However, on more than one occasion, proprietary names were used as opposed to generic.

The format of tantalizing the reader with a set of clinical clues followed by a discussion brings to life rehabilitation principles. Unfortunately some cases did not give any information on long-term patient outcome and therefore these cases lacked this key rehabilitation dimension.

The editor thanked the contributing authors for their effort and time in the preface of the book but I could not find any acknowledgement of the patients from whom the clinical images were derived.

Nonetheless, I would recommend this book to anyone involved in physical medicine and rehabilitation. It is reasonably priced and there are scant publications that draw clinical scenarios into such an enticing format.

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