

Book Review

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ABC of Spinal Cord Injury

David Grundy, Andrew Swain

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Ever since it was first published in 1986, *ABC of Spinal Cord Injury* has been a very popular, practical guide to spinal cord injuries. It succeeds in its aim of giving a comprehensive, yet concise and clear step-by-step outline of the management of a spinal cord injured patient through all phases of care and rehabilitation. Written and edited by specialists in spinal cord injuries and emergency medicine, with the contributors who are all experts in their respective fields, it offers a truly multidisciplinary approach to managing a patient with spinal cord injury. It follows the patient from the scene of the accident, through initial evacuation and early management, investigations, immediate medical problems and later complications, to discharge into the community. The importance of specialist nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy are rightly emphasised, as well as patient's and family's psychological adjustment, social needs and reintegration into society. There have been four editions of the book so far, each one thoroughly revised and updated.

This fourth edition, redesigned in the current ABC series style, offers more than just a design 'make-over'. While keeping the same goals as previously, it incorporates latest developments in each aspect of care. The emergency care

conforms to currently used pre-hospital evacuation techniques and advanced trauma life support refinements. Neurological examination includes an up-to-date neurological assessment and classification of spinal cord injuries, with emphasis on making the correct early diagnosis in view of the current increase in litigation. Where appropriate, new surgical and technical advances to enhance function and independence are described. The problems of ageing with spinal cord injury, which improved life expectancy brings, and a whole new chapter on applying the latest knowledge in developing countries were added. Further reading lists at the end of each chapter are updated with the latest publications and relevant websites.

ABC of Spinal Cord Injury will remain essential introductory reading for all new health care professionals entering training in the specialist field of spinal cord injuries and useful to all non-specialists, especially those working in accident and emergency, traumatology, orthopaedics, neurosurgery, neurology and radiology, as well as general practitioners and others who may come across a spinal cord injured patient during their working life.

Gordana Savić
Clinical Scientist
National Spinal Injuries Centre
Stoke Mandeville Hospital
Aylesbury, Bucks HP21 8AL, UK