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Teeth for life for older adults

P. Finbarr Allen
London: Quintessence 2002
price £28.00, pp124
ISBN 1850970564

This book, the latest in the Quintessential series, offers practitioners a reference book detailing the problems and subsequent management of the older adult. The title itself demonstrates a degree of political correctness echoing the description of this age group is to be found in many a government offering.

In the fashion of all well trained educationalists, Dr Allen gives the reader clearly defined aims, objectives and learning outcomes at the beginning of each chapter. The subjects covered are reassuringly as you would expect; periodontal disease, endodontic problems, root caries, oral cancer, tooth replacement and tooth wear (or for those pedants amongst us tooth surface loss).

The book is refreshingly sparse in jargon and offers good common sense advice to practitioners. An example of the very practical nature of the book is the inclusion of a few step by step recipes for procedures that the average practitioner might expect to undertake on a less frequent basis. The photographs are many and display the problems of the older adult vividly, but more to the point, they are representative of the sort of patient that turn up in practice every day (plaque, root caries, 'gum stripper' dentures, warts and all!).

As well as being a good reference text for practitioners I would consider this book to be ideal for any final year student as so many basic principles are covered.

Despite the remit of the review to find fault and criticise, I must admit I had to look hard to find any. There are one or two sweeping statements which I found to be poorly explained. For example the

author states that candidiasis is only ever seen in the maxillary arch and yet I have seen it in the mandible, albeit very infrequently. Other comments such as, chemotherapy is sometimes used in the management of oral cancer, which although true, could have perhaps been expanded upon to bring the practitioner right up to date with the latest conjunctive radio/chemo therapy.

My favourite aspect of the book is the way in which the reader is constantly challenged to plan ahead to the future and consider the clinical scenario a few years down the line. This is an invaluable lesson for all to learn and applies not only to the older patient. All in all an excellent book which may well find its way onto a recommended reading list in at least one University North of the Tyne.

J. S. Ellis

Diagnosis and risk prediction of periodontal diseases

P. Axelsson.
London : Quintessence 2002
price £111.00, pp463
ISBN 0867153636

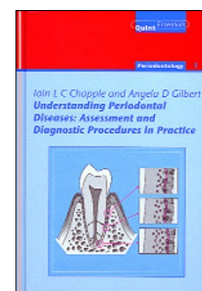
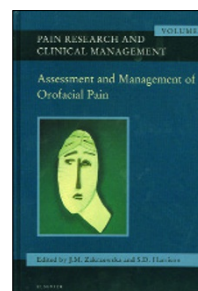
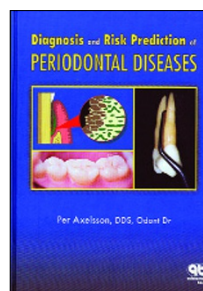
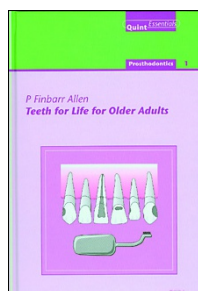
This is a remarkable book. Rarely have I sensed an author's passionate commitment to a subject and this is evident from the first page to last. This book is the third in a series written by Professor Per Axelsson, who is Professor of Preventive Dentistry in Karlstad, Sweden and who has made a major contribution to the oral health of Sweden. A clue as to what to expect may be found in the preface. Prof. Axelsson explains that he has spent every evening and weekend working on the books over the last five years – the commitment is manifest.

The book aims to give a foundation for the prevention and management of the periodontal diseases. In fact prevention and management will be covered within the last two volumes of the series. The foundation is divided into seven chapters covering aetiology, risk factors, classification and pathogenesis and diagnosis and epidemiology. The format of each is similar comprising a detailed treatment of the topic, supported extensively by research evidence. The research is carefully selected to illustrate the text. Thoughtfully, each chapter concludes with a brief summary of the main points and messages.

Professor Axelsson takes the privilege of being surprisingly speculative. He identifies many recent and exciting developments in periodontology. Some of these may prove to be valuable although currently we await full verification. One example is the emphasis placed upon testing for the genotype (IL-1 polymorphism) suggested to identify individuals at risk of developing severe periodontitis. Whilst a test has been commercially available for more than three years, research evidence is unclear regarding the use of such testing.

This book demands careful and thoughtful reading. The treatment of much of the literature is highly detailed and cannot be hurried. The book is aimed at a wide spectrum including dentists, hygienists, undergraduates and postgraduates. The needs of this readership are varied. I think that it is most closely targeted at those with a very strong emphasis in periodontology and public health and will also be valuable to graduate students. I would recommend broader foundation texts for those wishing to gain a general understanding of the field. However, reading the new addition to the series will give an unrivalled understanding and insight into the preventive genius of Per Axelsson.

I. Needleman



Assessment and management of orofacial pain

J. M. Zakrzewska and S. D. Harrison, Eds
London: Elsevier, 2002
price: USD 90.00, pp 416
ISBN 0444509844

This is Volume 14 of the Elsevier Science B.V. series on pain research and clinical management. A hardback book with 407 pages and 17 chapters covering neurobiology, psychology, neurology, history taking and examination, pain assessment and measurement, classification and management strategies.

The page text is of two column format making reading relaxed. Bullet point summaries are used with good effect and greyed boxes list key information. Clinical conundrums usefully complement learning and understanding. Patient testimonies add richness to the dialogue. The book adopts an evidence based medicine (EBM) approach. The first word in the book is 'Welcome!'

I was impressed by the extensive literature research and concise EBM analysis devoted to each chapter. Consequently, this book must find a place in every library serving the medical and dental professions from undergraduate to postgraduate levels throughout the world. Dental vocational trainees and those pursuing continuing professional education (CPE) should own a personal copy.

Two recommendations for the next edition: I thought that we had moved on from the days when patients 'complained of'. Today, patients have a 'presenting problem'.

Barber/dentist days are gone. Can we stop referring to a skilful surgical procedure as an 'extraction'? Who has their appendix or gall bladder extracted? Tooth removal, please, in future.

Chapter 10, dental pain, I thought was rather superficial. This title is the most common cause of orofacial pain. There is no such thing as 'reversible' or 'irreversible' pulpitis in oral pathology. The text actually states that there is no EBM to support these statements. The diagnosis, in either case, is acute pulpitis, which is not mentioned. Then, 'pericoronitis' – I assume this to mean acute pericoronitis, rather than the painless chronic variety. Acute periodontitis is not mentioned at all. 'Periapical periodontitis' (acute?) is an obsolete term – peri-radicular being more accurate. The significance between percussion and tapping tests, as applied to a tooth, is not explained.

Notwithstanding these personal observations, the editors are to be congratulated.

The book is affectionately dedicated to the late Professor Patrick D Wall.

R. Matthews

Understanding periodontal diseases: assessment and diagnostic procedures in practice

I. L. C. Chapple and A. D. Gilbert
London: Quintessence Publishing, 2002
price: £ 28.00, 160pp
ISBN 185097053x

This small, succinct but well-written and well-presented book forms the first in a series of texts from this publisher on several aspects of dentistry pertinent to the GDP that will become available between now and 2005. It is targeted at general practitioners, hygienists and senior dental and hygiene students, but may also be useful for those preparing for MFDS and for some specialist

trainees. The text of ten chapters ranges from basic anatomy and pathology through to host responses and susceptibility, and then uses these principles to outline criteria and protocols for periodontal diagnosis and assessment.

The text and tables have very few typographical errors. Overall, whilst the text is well written, some areas contain much detail and readers would benefit if they have extra insight or have done some associated reading. Certainly this book would be useful as part of a course where it is supported by tutorials or group discussions. Some references are included at the end of each chapter.

Chapters 3 and 4 ('host response' and 'risk assessment') are particularly well written, with relevant, contemporary critical summaries of special periodontal susceptibility tests as well as of mechanisms of disease and cells and molecules involved. The science can get a little 'hardcore' at times but this is generally an easy and easily understood read, with the exception perhaps of one diagram.

There are very occasional small omissions. For instance, chapter eight fails to suggest that vitality tests may be considered for heavily restored teeth or those with deep localised probing depths.

Some recent information has not been incorporated (as may be expected for any textbook) and the term 'root planning' is mentioned as a current form of treatment. The radiological guidelines are sound but may require modification in view of the fact that when skin and parotid doses are considered, a routine panoramic film actually gives a larger dose than a full mouth periapical series, yet usually delivers less information.

This book is a very good summary of the pathogenesis and diagnosis of periodontitis and should be popular amongst the planned target groups.

M. Ide