
BOOK REVIEWS

Basic Ophthalmology

F. G. Berson. San Francisco: American Academy of Ophthalmology, 1993.

The aim of this book is to help medical students and primary care residents learn the essentials of ophthalmic diagnosis and management. For the medical student it is intended to be used in conjunction with the comprehensive standard texts and articles which are referenced at the end of each chapter.

The book adopts a problem-orientated approach and is divided into nine chapters, starting with the eye examination and progressing through clinical topics such as acute visual loss, the red eye and ocular manifestations of systemic disease. Each chapter is similarly structured, beginning with an outline of its objectives and the relevance of the topic. A rather brief consideration of pathophysiology is then followed by a more detailed description of clinical features and management.

The text is clear and supported with well-annotated quality colour photographs. However, some extra diagrams would have been helpful to clarify important concepts such as refractive errors, or visual field defects in glaucoma. It is frequently necessary to refer from one chapter to another when using this book.

From the general practitioner's point of view the book provides a good practical approach to the diagnosis and treatment of common eye problems, and sound advice on when to refer to an ophthalmologist. However, there is sometimes a lack of detail on specifics of management: for example the use of antibiotics in conjunctivitis. From the medical student's point of view this book does need to be used with a more comprehensive text, and this may detract from its appeal to undergraduates.

Alison Burbidge
Andrew Browning

Medical Contact Lens Practice

Ian Mackie.
Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1993.

As the contact lens wearing population increases ophthalmologists are encountering contact lens related pathology with increasing frequency. This fully referenced book, with excellent illustrations, enables the reader to identify

and treat contact lens related disease, and shows that this can often be achieved without abandoning lens wear.

The main object of the chapters on fitting lenses, whilst giving sufficient information for those wishing to commence fitting, is to enable the reader to identify good and bad fits in order that problems caused by fitting may be differentiated from other causes. Complicated formulae and optics have been omitted, rendering the chapters more 'reader-friendly' to the average ophthalmologist. There is a useful chapter on the insertion and removal of lenses by the ophthalmologist for those unfamiliar with the techniques. Lack of proper care with inadequate attention to cleaning and disinfection is a major cause of problems, particularly with soft lenses, and these factors are dealt with in detail in the text. There are separate chapters on the adverse reactions associated with the different lens types which reflect the author's long-standing interest in external eye disease.

Whilst it is obviously impossible in a text of this size to cover all aspects of contact lens fitting and wear in detail it would have been useful to have included examples of those patients eligible for lenses under the National Health Service via the Hospital Eye Service for those readers in the United Kingdom and the advantages of contact lenses over spectacles. A short chapter on the basic optics of the subject would be helpful to examination candidates.

Minor difficulties were encountered with cross-references which were not given page numbers and there was some unnecessary repetition, as when the method of examination for corneal oedema is detailed on p.102 and repeated on p.109. Finally in a clinical situation it would be easier to refer to the Appendices if they were gathered at the end of the book.

Apart from these minor criticisms this book provides a great deal of information in a very compact form (221 pages) and should find a place on the bookshelves of everyone concerned with contact lenses from Senior House Officer in the casualty department to the Consultant in the outpatient clinic, as well as the ophthalmologist with a specialist interest.

E. Mills

Intraocular Lenses: Basics and Clinical Applications.

R. L. Stamper, A. Sugar and D. J. Ripkin. San Francisco: American Academy of Ophthalmology, 1993.

This softback book is the seventh in the American Academy Monograph series and deals comprehensively with

the subject of intraocular lenses (IOLs). Beginning with a history of IOLs the authors proceed to consider the technical aspects of the materials used in their manufacture and the basic manufacturing techniques. They then review the range of different IOL styles which have been and are currently in use – some of which will never have been seen by surgeons-in-training today. The different surgical techniques are briefly presented, together with data for the range of possible complications associated with IOL use in primary and secondary implantation. There is a presentation of results with different types of IOL in both standard and complicated situations. Patient selection and pre-operative patient assessment are both covered – albeit

not in logical order. The book concludes with a self-assessment multiple-choice examination for purposes of CME accreditation that could be of interest to all readers.

In 12 chapters and 180 pages the authors cover this important subject concisely and comprehensively and present a balanced approach. Their style is clear and easy to read and the publication is of high quality with good colour illustrations and comprehensive references in each chapter. This excellent book does justice to the others in the Monograph series and I would recommend it strongly as essential reading for all surgeons-in-training and commend it to all who consider themselves trained.

Jeffrey S. Hillman