BOOK REVIEWS

Interventional Pulmonary Medicine. Lung Biology in Health and Disease
Edited by J.F. Beamis Jr, P.N. Mahtur, A.C. Mehta
Published by Marcel Dekker, New York 2004, Volume 189
Pages: 689. Price: £105.17, $195.00. ISBN–0-8247-4024-6

This book, in a well-known series on pulmonary topics, addresses diagnostic and therapeutic procedures in airways and *via* the transthoracic route. It covers 30 chapters and 689 pages, with almost all international experts in the field contributing. The layout of the book is analogous to the series of Lung Biology in Health and Disease, the texts are well written and tables and figures well-organised. All endoscopic pictures are in black-and-white and are of sufficient quality, though some of them would have been more clearer if printed in full colour. Each chapter is divided by a standard order of headings, and is supported by an extensive list of references.

The subjects that are dealt with are described both in detail and in a comprehensive way. The text is up to date, with sources from up to 2003 being referred to. A quarter of the chapters include the heading "Evidence-based literature review". This gives useful additional information within a field of medicine in which there is a lot of "how I do it" content without any data. It would have made the book even more valuable if most of the authors had followed the same format in their chapters. There are a few duplications regarding some elements, *e.g.* historical reflections, which are described in several chapters in addition to chapters which are only dealing with history of the same procedure or technique.

All subjects that one can think of are represented in this book except for two. First, broncho-oesophageal fistula are only mentioned shortly in a couple of sections on bronchology, whereas fistulae, either at presentation or as a complication of treatment, are much more difficult to manage than stenoses and are known to all doctors involved in bronchology. It would have been worthwhile to write a chapter on this topic alone. Secondly, ultrasound does not get the attention that it deserves. Endoscopic ultrasound is a tool for the near future, and though the chapter on transbronchial needle aspiration discusses this technique briefly, it is not sufficiently dealt with. Transthoracic ultrasound is a very convenient method of imaging that should be mentioned, at the very least, in chapters on chest tubes and transthoracic needle aspiration.

Altogether, taking the above mentioned into account, this book is a very useful source for chest physicians and should be available in all departments that are dealing with interventional techniques. It can be a first source in writing local protocols or guidelines, and as for the few missing subjects one should simply look elsewhere.

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Handbook of Nutrition and Immunity
Edited by M.E. Gerswin, P. Nestel, C.L. Keen
Published by Humana Press, Totawa, New Jersey, USA
Pages: 365. Price: Hardcover £47.83, $89.50 (CD with Personal Digital Assistant version included), E-book £42.50, $79.50.
ISBN-1-58829-308-4. E-ISBN-1-59259-790-4

In recent decades the interest in nutrition has increased. The role of nutrition in maintaining health and in the prevention of diseases, such as certain types of malignancies, coronary events and Alzheimer disease, has been the subject of intensive research. This book emphasises the role of nutrition in immunological processes.

The first two chapters describe extensively the methods by which the immune functions can be established in certain risk groups, such as the elderly and low birth weight children, and the various ways to assess the nutritional status, *e.g.* history, clinical assessment and laboratory tests) are discussed. Special attention is paid to the pregnant and lactating female in Chapter 3. The second part of the book (Chapters 4–7 and 9–10) contains detailed information about the effects of severe under nutrition, the role of vitamins, trace elements, dietary fat, antioxidants and pro- and pre-biotics on immune functions. The third part of the book covers specific clinical problems, such as allergy, Malaria, diarrhoea, acute respiratory infections and HIV.

This book is, as the authors' state, a concise version of the textbook "*Nutrition and Immunology: Principles and Practices*". The information in the book is very accessible as each chapter contains key points that cover the main topics of the chapter. The reference lists are extensive and up to date. Furthermore, the tables and figures are useful and easy to read. The CD with the Personal Digital Assistant version is very convenient for the clinicians using a handheld computer in their daily routine. The only drawback in the lay out of the book is that all authors make ample use of abbreviations, which are not always easy to retrace. It would be convenient to the reader if a list of abbreviations was added at the end of each chapter or after the final chapter.

The content of the various chapters is informative, complete and qualitatively high although there are a few inaccuracies. It is suggested that in the case of milk allergy, cheese and yogurt can be used as alternative sources of calcium. This is not entirely true; if a patient is allergic to cow's milk, the consumption of cheese and yogurt made of cow's milk can lead to adverse reactions. Furthermore, the role of a type II allergy to food allergens is open to question. In the discussions about the hygiene hypothesis the most recent developments, such as the regulatory T-cell, dendritic cell and the role of innate immunity, are lacking.

In conclusion, this is a useful book, relevant not only to clinicians treating patients at risk of under nutrition, such as the elderly, HIV patients or patients in developing countries, but also for those treating patients with infections such as Malaria, pulmonary infections or diarrhoea. It is also recommendable to clinicians working in the field of immunology, to medical students as an introduction to the subject or to dieticians as background information.

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