

BOOK REVIEWS

Core Topics in Airway Management

Edited by I. Calder and A. Pearce

Published by Cambridge University Press

Pages: 209. Price: £40, €65. ISBN: 1-841101-58-3

Edited by two British anaesthetists, well known in the field of airway management, this book answers the readers' expectations concerning concise information on every aspect of routine airway management as well as the "difficult airway".

The book consists of 26 chapters, written by 20 authors, which cover the whole field starting with anatomy, physiology and applied physics of the airways before moving on to various procedures of airway maintenance under anaesthesia (face masks, supra-glottic devices, combitubes, tracheal single and double lumen tubes, intubation *via* fiberoptic or retrograde techniques).

The important problem of the "difficult airway" (obstruction by infection, tumour or a foreign body) is discussed as well as the "shared airway" in ENT and maxillofacial surgery. Special problems in trauma, cervical spine disease, obstetrics, paediatrics and ICK-problems are dealt with as well as extubation and post-intubation recovery.

Additional chapters deal with design and standardisation of standard and laser-proof tubes, cleaning of airway equipment and important medical legal issues. A list of abbreviations is useful as are the several up-to-date further reading recommendations at the end of each chapter.

This useful book can be recommended without reservation to a wide spectrum of medical professionals engaged in airway management problems such as anaesthetists, intensive care unit staff, pneumologists and operating department practitioners as well as theatre, recovery and respiratory therapists.

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Physiologic Basis of Respiratory Disease

Edited by Q. Hamid, J. Shannon and J. Martin

Published by BC Decker Inc., Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Pages: 793. Price: £95, €140. ISBN: 1-55009-236-7

This book is very timely and fills the wide gap between respiratory cell biology and clinical medicine. Since the 1990s there have been eye-catching advancements in the molecular as well as the clinical science of respiratory diseases. However, these two developments have largely occurred independently, as scientists at both ends encounter growing difficulties in understanding each other's languages. This has certainly impeded the development of novel diagnostic and therapeutic strategies. Recently, it has been recognised that the integrative power of physiology is indispensable for this field to move ahead. In fact, equally exciting progress has recently been made in respiratory pathophysiology, thereby linking cellular and clinical science in respiratory medicine. This publication addresses these issues.

The book provides a full coverage of functional morphology (including stereologic analysis), mechanics of breathing (together with modern imaging), pulmonary ventilation, circulation and gas exchange (including a strong chapter on pulmonary oedema). The issues are often discussed from a pathophysiological angle, particularly with respect to asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and pulmonary fibrosis. The book covers airways, lung parenchyma, respiratory muscles and the control of breathing. There is special focus on exercise, sleep and the various lung defence mechanisms. Finally, the book is very explicit in guiding the clinician and the scientist regarding the various methods of measurement.

The overall strength of the book is its focus on the dynamics of the respiratory system in health and disease, both at the cellular and the organ level. This dynamic interplay between structure and

function at microscopic and macroscopic scales is key for understanding the clinical presentation of disease.

The state-of-the-art chapters have been written by a mixture of senior and more junior experts from around the world. Together, they benefit from more than 80 yrs of excellence at the McGill University in Montreal. The book demonstrates that the Meakins-Christie Laboratories have been, and still are, a training ground for top quality integrative respiratory scientists.

Issues such as the physiological basis of embryonic development, ageing, respiratory symptoms, ventilatory support and pharmacological interventions for example may perhaps be expanded in future editions. The figures, graphs, tables and schedules are generally clear and didactic and each chapter ends with a concise summary and conclusion. The references are up-to-date until 2004. The book is accompanied by a CD-ROM, including all chapters in PDF format. This is a great facility, but I was personally slightly disappointed that the figures of the book could not readily be downloaded as PowerPoint slides.

This book has few competitors because of its integrative nature. It is not a book focussed on respiratory cell and molecular biology. It is not a comprehensive book on clinical respiratory medicine. It is more than that. This is exactly the reason why it should be a standard text on the shelves of both cell biologists and clinicians who seriously focus on respiratory disease.

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