

BOOK REVIEWS

Principles and Practice of Mechanical Ventilation. Second Edition.

Edited by Martin J Tobin

Published by McGraw-Hill Pub , NY, pp 1442.

I do not appreciate the sequels of even successful movies (except "The Godfather" Part II, of course...) which usually are not at the level of their prime idea. So, when faced with the review of this textbook I was rather sceptic to find anything substantial new. Two ideas changed my mind.

First, the nomination as "millennium man" has been attributed to Gutenberg, the inventor of The Press. In other words, the transmission of culture through books has been considered as the most important progress for humanity in the last 1000 years. This would be enough to consider books as still fundamental for humanity. Nevertheless in the Internet era, books are almost considered as useless (if not used to sustain a shorter leg of a table...). This is a disappointing attitude which must be faced by everyone concerned of human being progress. The Second Edition of "*Principles and Practice of Mechanical Ventilation*" is a tool to support the idea that books are still useful. This turns us to the second factor.

Twelve, and not 3, years later, Martin J Tobin has refreshed (renewed) his textbook with the goal to provide a comprehensive and contemporary discussion of mechanical ventilation based on the application of knowledge gained through research. The first edition had been defined as the "Bible of Intensivists". According to this definition this second edition can appropriately be defined as the "New Testament".

We needed it. Few areas of medicine have undergone so much change as mechanical ventilation. Since 1994, when The First Edition come out, almost everything has more or less changed in the field. Devices have changed. Protocols have changed.

Operators have changed. It is enough to think of the use of non invasive ventilation *in the ward* which means simplified devices and protocols as opposed to the more expensive (but safer) Intensive or Intermediate Intensive Care Units. It means also that the principles and practice of mechanical ventilation must be known also by pulmonologists, cardiologists, physiotherapists.

This second edition fulfills the purpose. It addresses every important scientific, clinical and technical aspects of the field. Seventy well-organised chapters (among which 24 new) by the most important international authorities address mechanical ventilation, including the physical basis, conventional, alternative, non-invasive, and unconventional methods of ventilator support; complications and airway management; ethics and economics. The new chapters address current issues such as closed loop ventilation, inhaled antibiotic therapy, sleep and speech in the ventilated patient, mechanical ventilation in ARDS, ventilation outside the ICU, pharmacological and adjuvant therapy and more. Greater use of tables and lists that conveniently summarise key information and solidify chapter concepts have been included.

I have read with great interest and pleasure many chapters (Not all : nobody would have believed me) of this Textbook, and I have compelled my fellows to make the same.

It is enough.

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