

BOOK REVIEW

Physiology and Practice of Pulmonary Function

Edited by J.M.B. Hughes

Published by the Association for Respiratory Technology and Physiology (ARTP), UK

Pages: 323. Price: £24.95. ISBN: 978-0-9536898-5-9

The knowledge of respiratory physiology has progressed considerably in recent decades. However, the current tendency in clinical practice has been to restrict pulmonary function testing to simple spirometry, while most of the advanced methods have been considered as unnecessary or even esoteric. This has probably been due to a growing enthusiasm towards easy-to-measure biological markers, the clinical usefulness of which is still to be determined, but also to a poor communication between physiologists and clinicians.

In this scenario, *Physiology and Practice of Pulmonary Function* is most welcome because it presents pulmonary physiology as a lively and refreshing discipline that is not renounceable in clinical practice and thus, hopefully, helping to reduce the gap between lung function acolytes and pulmonary physicians who work at the bedside. This paperback book is an update of *Lung Function Tests: Physiological Principles and Clinical Applications*, published in 1999, and emphasises those fields that have now become part of the pulmonologist's expertise, such as sleep disorders and exercise.

The book is concise and pocket sized but, nonetheless, exhaustive in that it covers the basic principles of respiratory physiology and the recent refinements of classical methods, as well as newly introduced techniques. Other books on clinical respiratory physiology have been recently published but this book has a particular

style that makes it unique and a useful addition to other publications.

The abundance of examples and stimulating figures define this book as an excellent educational component. Moreover, the summary tables and algorithms identified for test choice and interpretation make it a useful ready-to-consult textbook for the staff of pulmonary function laboratories. The book is comprised of 18 chapters and the topics covered include spirometry, flow-volume curves, bronchial challenges, lung volumes and respiratory mechanics, respiratory muscles, transfer factor (diffusing capacity), gas exchange, exercise tests, control of breathing and sleep-disordered breathing, as well as noninvasive ventilation and the pathophysiology of various obstructive, restrictive and vascular conditions.

Last but not least the book is very reasonably priced. Overall, this book can be recommended as an invaluable tool for those who work in pulmonary function laboratories and also for clinicians willing to take advantage of state-of-the-art lung function testing.

V. Brusasco
Genoa, Italy