

BOOK REVIEW

Medical Management of the Thoracic Surgery Patient

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This book provides an extensive overview of all aspects of general thoracic surgery and is divided into 11 major sections: diagnostic workup; thoracic surgical procedures; the upper airway; disorders of the lung; lung transplantation; mediastinum; pleura; chest wall and diaphragm; pulmonary vascular conditions; trauma; and oesophagus. In this way, it covers all topics encountered by a general thoracic surgeon. It does not follow the typical layout of a classical textbook and throughout the book there are several subheadings, and bulleted lists are used to indicate the most important points. As a result, the text does not read as fluently as it might in some parts, but specific information is easier to retrieve. Although there are more than 80 contributors, with most coming from California, USA and, more specifically, the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, the overall aspect is very homogeneous.

In the introduction the authors state that they wanted to present a compilation of "pearls of knowledge". They were certainly successful in providing the latest scientific information to a broad readership of fellows and practicing surgeons in general thoracic surgery. Unfortunately, the level of evidence is not

indicated, making it more difficult for the reader to know the exact strength of specific recommendations. However, there is a multitude of beautiful illustrations, key points and clinical cases reflecting current surgical practice. The text is very up to date, e.g. the new TNM classification for lung cancer which is to be introduced early in 2010 is already covered. Because of this, critical care physicians, oncologists and pulmonary physicians dealing with thoracic surgery will find the information in this book both useful and practical. References are not mentioned in the book itself but can be consulted on a specific website for which a password is provided.

This book clearly goes far beyond the medical management of the thoracic surgery patient, as it provides a detailed overview of all aspects of general thoracic surgery, including important technical details. It is an invaluable resource that can be recommended to every physician taking care of thoracic surgical patients.

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