

The conference was a first step in bringing together stakeholders in the field of diagnostics research in India. It enabled them to begin a dialogue centred on the problems and solutions needed to work towards an affordable POC for the diagnosis of active TB. One can only hope that the interactions will trigger changes, new ideas and partnerships that enable all those involved to take steps forward in the fight against TB.

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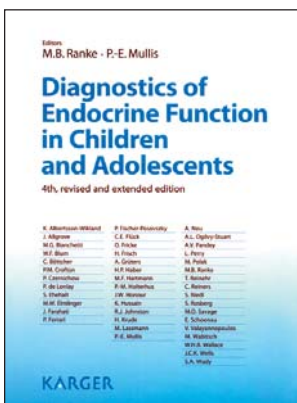
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Book Reviews

Diagnostics of Endocrine Function in Children and Adolescents. M. B. Ranke, P. E. Mullis (eds). 4th revised and extended edition. S. Karger, Basel, 2011. 536 pp, US\$ 180. ISBN 978-3-8055-9414-1.



The interpretation of diagnostic endocrine tests is quite complex and needs detailed information both on the subject as well as the procedure. The issue is further complicated in the case of children as changing age, body mass index (BMI) and pubertal status may affect the results of these diagnostic tests. This book is a compilation of the interpretation of these diagnostic tests. This edition has been extensively revised by 43 distinguished European contri-

butors, each recognized as an expert in his or her field. The previous edition was published in 2003; hence, a new edition was very much required to bring the knowledge of paediatric endocrinology up-to-date.

This book presents a range of diagnostic approaches and test procedures used in the evaluation of complex paediatric endocrine disorders. At the same time, the authors have made an attempt to provide normative data on various parameters, especially biochemical, which may help to make the interpretation of results easier. The book has comprehensively reviewed all endocrine diagnostic tests and their interpretation for use in the diagnosis of paediatric endocrine disorders.

The interpretation of diagnostic tests and factors affecting the results of these tests are set out in the text in a nice way, supported by illustrations, graphs and schematic diagrams. However, it would have been better if the cut-off values for the interpretation of these tests had been given in a tabular form or highlighted in a box at the end of the tests to facilitate a quick review. The chapters are organized more or less similarly. All chapters start with an introduction, followed by a brief summary of the disease state and a list of tests to assess endocrine function, with an explanation of the physiological basis. Most of the chapters also include a brief

clinical assessment, followed by a detailed endocrine laboratory assessment. Another important feature of the book is that it mentions precautions and correct procedures to collect blood samples for endocrine evaluation—this may be very helpful for practical purposes. Also, it describes the optimum conditions for the storage of blood samples for future evaluation. This will be very useful for people doing research in this area. The authors have also given the normal levels of biochemical parameters according to age, sex and pubertal stage, which is again a very useful inclusion. One of the most difficult and complex issues in paediatric endocrine testing is the use of cut-off values for the interpretation of results. Although it may not be possible for anyone to give clear cut-offs for all the tests, the authors have tried their best to give different cut-offs and have discussed their limitations in view of increasing age. However, at a few places, cut-offs have not been given or discussed, such as in the case of the interpretation of the GnRH stimulation test for the evaluation of the hypothalamic–pituitary–ovarian axis. The reader will thus be forced to search for additional literature on the interpretation of these tests.

In many chapters, the genetic basis of various diseases has been given in a tabular form, which will be of immense help if one wants to do a quick review. The chapter on ‘Laboratory measurement of hormones and related biomarkers’ is truly exceptional in that it explains all possible details and issues associated with these techniques. It will be very useful in helping the reader to understand the limitations as well as the factors affecting the results of these diagnostic tests. Many chapters from the previous edition have been revised extensively, and newer data have been included. The chapter on insulin resistance will be very useful for researchers as it gives all the practical details of clamp studies. The addition of a new chapter, ‘Quantification of densitometric bone parameters and muscle function’, is really very valuable as this complex issue is rarely addressed in textbooks. With wider availability of densitometry facilities in India, the interpretation of bone mineral density assessment in children has become important. The format given for the interpretation of the results of densitometry in children is easy to understand; the details of all the terminology used are explained first, and then the interpretation. The relatively recent concept of ‘functional muscle-bone unit’ is addressed satisfactorily. The details of dysmorphic syndromes associated with endocrine diseases have been compiled

in an easy-to-understand tabular format, which may be quite useful for readers.

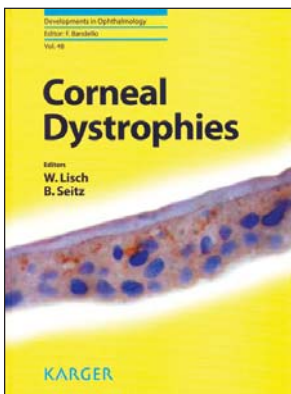
Appendix B gives a diagnostic pathway for the evaluation of all paediatric endocrine diseases. This will assist the reader in understanding the underlying disease process and the evaluation of diseases, and it may be very useful to take a quick glance at it for the work-up of these problems. Although the authors have given a detailed conversion table for converting current units to SI units, it would have been better if other required tables, such as a table to calculate the body surface area from height and weight, or the nomogram of Walton and Bijvoet to calculate TmPO₄/GFR, had also been given, as also a table on the dosage of many drugs used for diagnostic purposes by square metre of the surface area of the body.

The new edition of the book has more pages and is hard-bound, which makes for a good shelf life. The text is laid out in a format that is easy to read. However, the price is on the higher side, especially when the previous edition is available at a much lower price. The book is meant primarily for people who have some exposure to and experience of working in the field of endocrinology, and it may be difficult for the primary physician or paediatrician to interpret these tests just by reading. This book should provide paediatric endocrinologists with a clear picture of all the endocrine tests used for diagnostic purposes and will be very useful while carrying out various diagnostic tests and interpreting their results. Endocrinologists treating adults will also find this book very useful for updating their knowledge of endocrine diagnostic evaluation.

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Corneal Dystrophies. Walter Lisch, Berthold Seitz (eds). S. Karger, Basel, 2011. 160 pp, price not mentioned. ISBN 978–3–8055–9720–3.



This book is Volume 48 of the series on 'Developments in Ophthalmology' published by Karger. This latest addition to the set is a much-needed concise summary of the recent developments in the field. The contributing authors are renowned authorities in the field. The chapters are planned well, to comprehensively review all the relevant information required to bring the reader up to date on the subject.

The preface succinctly describes the aims and scope of the book. Each chapter is well written, in a style that is easy to read, and contains illustrations and references to support the descriptions.

The clinical information is up-to-date and supportive laboratory

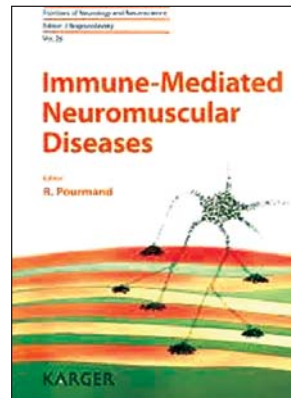
investigations and tests, including confocal microscopy, molecular genetics, histopathology, electron microscopy and immunohistochemistry, are described well.

Ophthalmology residents, practising ophthalmologists, corneal surgeons and PhD students working on the subject will enjoy the book. The volume can be recommended for libraries in departments of ophthalmology and research departments working in this field. The volume is neat and handy to carry. The quality of paper and print are good, as with all the other books in the series, and this book can be considered well worth the price.

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Immune-Mediated Neuromuscular Diseases. Frontiers of Neurology and Neuroscience. R. Pourmand (ed). S. Karger, Basel, 2009. 170 pp, price not mentioned. ISBN 978–3–8055–9141–6.



Along with the evolution of humans, the immune system has also evolved over millions of years and protects the host from microbes and their virulence factors. It is a very sophisticated defence mechanism and uses germ-line encoded proteins to recognize pathogens. The human immune system involves both innate and adaptive immunity, as in any other vertebrate.

There are various neuro-muscular diseases in which the main pathogenic mechanism seems to be related to aberrant immune-related injury. Though the cause of this abnormal reactivity may not be evident in many cases, the presence of inflammatory reactions and various antibodies associated with the disease points to an immunogenic mechanism. This book covers a few common neuromuscular disorders which have immune-pathogenic mechanisms.

This multi-authored book has contributions by 16 experts. In its 10 chapters, it provides a comprehensive review of immune-muscular diseases, including diseases related to the spinal cord, nerves, muscles and neuromuscular junctions. It covers all aspects of each disease, including classification, clinical features, pathophysiology, differential diagnosis and management.

The chapters cover acute and chronic neuropathies, non-systemic vasculitic neuropathy, dysimmune neuropathy and autoimmune autonomic ganglionopathy, myasthenia gravis, Lambert–Eaton myasthenic syndrome, idiopathic inflammatory myopathies and stiff person syndrome. There is a separate chapter on acetylcholine receptor antibody-negative myasthenia gravis which summarizes both muscle-specific kinase (MuSK) antibody-positive and negative conditions. This seems relevant, as both these entities behave differently from the clinical and prognostic points of view.

The chapters on acute and chronic neuropathies, although short,

are well written and comprehensive. In addition, the chapter on non-systemic vasculitic neuropathy is comparatively extensive and details about pathology are supplemented with pictures of muscle and nerve biopsy. This chapter also gives a detailed description of different approaches to treatment before providing a consensus on the treatment. The chapter on stiff person syndrome gives a good review of pathophysiology, along with diagnostic criteria, and separately describes electrophysiological diagnostic criteria.

The book provides extensive references in each chapter and contains tables on relevant topics, such as differential diagnosis, classification and investigation. There are also a number of tables containing the comparative features of the differential diagnosis of a disease, for example the chapter on chronic neuropathy contains a table comparing the variants of chronic inflammatory demyelinating polyneuropathy (CIDP; Lewis–Sumner syndrome) with multifocal neuropathy.

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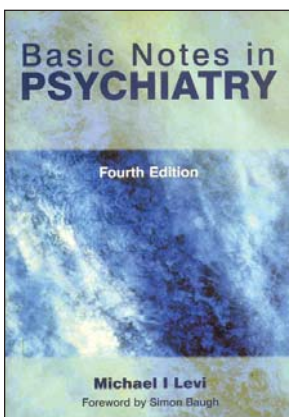
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Basic Notes in Psychiatry. Fourth edition. Michael I. Levi. Byword Books, New Delhi, 2010. 155 pp, ₹350. ISBN 978–81–8193–063–7.



This book seeks to provide a concise summary of general adult psychiatry in the form of notes, and to guide aspiring doctors to pass the membership examination of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

The book has 13 chapters that describe different psychiatric disorders in terms of clinical features, epidemiology, differential diagnosis, prognosis and management. The section on psychiatric emergencies includes a brief description of the Mental

Health Act (1987) of India. The book is written in simple and lucid language, which facilitates easy learning by junior doctors and other readers. It covers psychiatric interview techniques, major psychiatric diagnoses and psychopathology up to a level necessary for general understanding of the subject. Psychopharmacology is covered in greater detail, although probably not up to a level necessary to support practice. Perhaps in keeping with the requirement for simplicity, the author has not adhered strictly to the current (complex) nosology and classificatory systems. A more important limitation is the book's sketchy coverage of basic sciences related to psychiatry. There is no consistent coverage of materials relevant to examinations. The book does not cover some important topics, such as somatoform disorders.

Overall, the book appears to be easy to read, and is informative

for junior psychiatrists, general practitioners, medical students, psychiatric nurses, social workers and clinical psychologists. It seems to be an important handbook for a rapid revision before examinations.

PRATAP SHARAN

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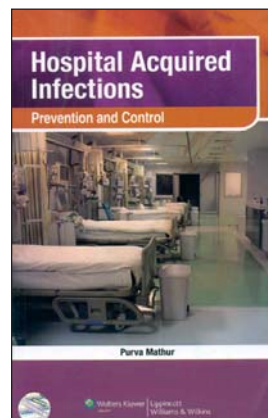
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Hospital Acquired Infections: Prevention and Control. Purva Mathur. Wolters Kluwer Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, New Delhi, 2010. 540 pp, price not mentioned. ISBN 978–81–8473–197–2.



Awareness of infection control received a major boost in the mid-nineteenth century, but its relevance as an important discipline has become evident only in the past few decades. Thanks to the epidemic of accreditations, infection control has become one of the most important quality indicators of healthcare facilities, especially for hospitals aiming for internationally competitive standards in quality healthcare.

In the graduate and postgraduate medical curricula in India, there is a dearth of syllabi covering infection control. Infection control is covered to some extent in the postgraduate curricula of the microbiology and infectious diseases courses. This is in contrast to the West, where there are specialized courses and certification examinations for healthcare personnel (HCP) who aspire to be infection control professionals (ICPs). Such courses, designed specifically for infection control, equip these candidates with the knowledge required for successfully managing an infection control programme in a healthcare facility. However, in India, ICPs start learning about the subject only when they are actually entrusted with the responsibility of running an infection control programme in a healthcare facility.

This book serves as an excellent guide to anyone who wishes to gain an operational and comprehensive knowledge of infection prevention and control. The author has referred to standard international guidelines from pivotal organizations, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, World Health Organization, Infectious Diseases Society of America and Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology. Although reading the chapters in chronological order is helpful for those new to this discipline, those with some background knowledge can also directly read a chapter of interest, since each chapter is designed to address a specific issue of infection control.

Topics such as infection control in laundry and food services have also been addressed in separate chapters. The author has

simplified the vast information on cleaning, disinfection and sterilization of critical, semi-critical and non-critical items by arranging it in a tabular form. The chapter on infection control in operation theatres is well compiled and the author has covered the controversial topic of microbiological sampling of operation theatres.

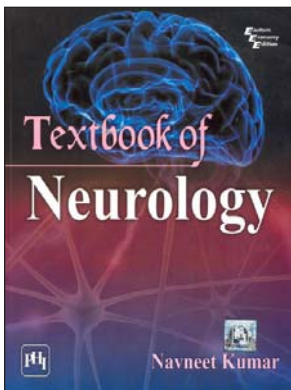
The book is a good guide to microbiologists for clinically-oriented issues, such as ventilator-associated pneumonias, catheter-associated urinary tract infections, catheter-related bloodstream infections and intensive care units. The topics of cleaning, disinfection and sterilization, central sterilization and supply department (CSSD), biomedical waste disposal, etc. will also help non-microbiology HCP to understand the microbiological perspective.

However, in future editions, I would like to see a chapter dealing with infection control in the laboratory and another one on infection control practices to be followed during renovation and construction activities in healthcare facilities.

Overall, the book is a ready reckoner for HCP already practising infection control and it is also a useful textbook for beginners in the field.

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Textbook of Neurology. Navneet Kumar. PHI Learning, New Delhi, 2011. 764 pp, ₹625. ISBN 978-81-203-4243-9.



The objective of this book is to provide a simple and systematic approach to the management of neurological disorders. The book is divided into 18 sections and 54 chapters, each with several illustrations, anatomical details, maxims, tables, etc. that are very striking, and there is a list of suggested reading at the end of each chapter.

The author has several years' experience in teaching students and treating patients. He has tried

to cover the whole of neurology and has placed emphasis on the commonly encountered neurological disorders. The introductory

chapters focus on clinical localization of neurological deficits, followed by the approach to acute confusional states. The author discusses the evaluation of higher mental functions, the neurological examination and various causes of confusional states. The chapter on coma has been laid out in a very systematic manner; it will enable students to understand neurological deficits with ease. Various common problems related to the management of epilepsy have been highlighted.

The book places emphasis on acute as well as chronic infections. A comprehensive account of neurocysticercosis and tuberculosis of the central nervous system has been given. Acute viral encephalitis due to herpes simplex virus and Japanese encephalitis have been taken up from the point of view of what the student should know to manage these conditions.

Practical pointers on the diagnosis and management of neurological emergencies have been given in a very simplified manner. The chapter on 'Approach to axial pain syndrome' deals with the clinical approach, various causes and treatment modalities, which are pictorially depicted. The chapter includes references to exercises and physiotherapy. Tension type headache and migraine have been appropriately emphasized. Important practical points are given to enable the reader to diagnose primary headaches, especially migraine, and to know what to prescribe for the prophylaxis and management of these attacks. Craniovertebral anomalies are described pictorially, and various craniometric lines needed for diagnosis have been discussed.

While discussing the approach to patients with cerebrovascular accident, the author dwells on ischaemic and haemorrhagic strokes. The chapter ends with an algorithm for the management of such patients.

The chapter on 'Dementia' deals with the distinction between degenerative and reversible dementias, mild cognitive impairment and Alzheimer disease. The chapters on 'Peripheral neuropathy' have a practical orientation, and the symptomatology of various types of neuropathies, plexopathies, radiculoneuropathies and autonomic dysfunction holds a key position. Besides discussing the approach to a patient with muscle disease, the author has given a comprehensive account of myasthenia gravis, including management issues and myasthenic crisis.

The diagnosis and management of raised intracranial pressure, brain tumours and some psychiatric disorders encountered in neurological patients have been dealt with. A full section is devoted to investigative neurology—imaging and electrophysiology, genes and stem cells.

The book is attractive, has nice illustrations and is reasonably priced. This is a good practical book on neurology in which complex neurological situations have been simplified with great clarity and understanding. I am sure it will be very useful to postgraduate students and various practitioners.

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