
Book Reviews

Critiques de livres

ATLAS OF TECHNIQUES IN BREAST SURGERY. William Silen, W. Earle Matory, Jr. and Susan M. Love. 158 pp. Illust. Lippincott-Raven Publishers, Philadelphia. 1996. \$99 (US). ISBN 0-397-50946-4

With this publication the authors intended to produce an atlas of breast surgical techniques because they perceived a need to improve the cosmetic outcome of breast-conserving surgery without compromising oncologic principles. The atlas format was presumably chosen because it could accurately convey the important operative details without sidetracking the reader with excessive text. However, although the authors' format, chapter headings and basic information are all well intentioned, the overall product does not quite live up to expectations.

There are five parts to the book. The first relays the important anatomic and cosmetic facets of breast surgery and discusses differences between the resting skin tension lines and Langer lines. This information can be used to optimize the orientation of skin incisions. The recommendations are generally in accordance with other accepted guidelines such as the National Surgical Adjuvant Breast Project (NSABP) publications. However, much of the authors' rationale appears to stem from the fact that they believe most patients will first have an open surgical biopsy, which will be followed by re-excision at a later date, at which time an ellipse of skin will be taken around the previous biopsy site. Others, including the NSABP, have advocated that the primary breast-preserving procedure be an excision of the cancer with a rim of normal tissue as one operation. This decreases the need for re-excision (and skin excision) and will provide superior cosmetic results. This one-step procedure has become

more prevalent with the use of accurate fine-needle aspiration biopsy or image-guided core biopsy.

The second section covers diagnostic procedures for palpable and non-palpable lesions, and the third section considers surgical treatment for malignant disease. In the section on partial mastectomy, one of the authors states that the breast tissue should be reapproximated. This is contrary to what most guidelines suggest, and the text explains: "experience has lead one of the authors to leave large resections without reapproximation, whereas another goes to great lengths to close the defect." This dichotomy of opinion does little to encourage the surgeon reader to change current practice and follow the recommendations.

I found the section on axillary dissection weak. One study quoted a 4% rate of skip metastases to level III nodes after a level I dissection in order to back up a limited axillary dissection. However, it is usually accepted (and stated elsewhere in the book) that a 4% rate of skip metastases occurs after a level I and II dissection. Unfortunately, much of the literature on the extent of axillary dissection is not referenced, and the illustrations of the axillary dissection leave much to be desired. Surgical trainees will gain little from this section. There is a definite bias toward doing a very limited axillary dissection.

In the fourth section the authors discuss postoperative reconstruction. This section is the best illustrated. However, some patients with subcutaneous mastectomies are shown; this procedure is generally not recommended for either treatment or prophylaxis of breast cancer.

The final section describes the technical approaches for common benign breast problems such as nipple discharge, chronic subareolar abscesses

and gynecomastia. This section is descriptive and details the authors' long experience.

This book is generally based on sound surgical practices and techniques. With improved artwork and an effort to provide a pithy, well referenced text it would be a definite asset to a surgical library. At present, however, general surgeons and residents might better spend their money on a well-illustrated, comprehensive text on breast cancer such as the one by Donegan and Spratt that was reviewed in the April issue of this journal (pages 170 and 171).

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BRENNER & RECTOR'S THE KIDNEY. Volume I and Volume II. 5th edition. Edited by Barry M. Brenner. 2702 pp. Illust. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia; W.B. Saunders Canada, Toronto. 1996. \$472 (two-volume set). ISBN (vol. 1) 0-7216-5073-2; (vol. 2) 0-7216-5074-0; (two-volume set) 0-7216-5075-9

This multiauthored two-volume text provides an up-to-date, comprehensive reference book for physicians and surgeons who are interested in the kidney. It incorporates molecular biology and genetics in its physiologic reviews and provides extensive clinical information about the kidney.

The text is divided into five sections, beginning with elements of normal renal structure and function. This

section covers the anatomy of the kidney, with excellent scanning electron micrographs, followed by an up-to-date chapter on the development of the kidney, including molecular and genetic aspects. A chapter on renal cell cultures is extensive but too detailed for the clinician. Other, more readable chapters review cell-to-cell interaction, ion transport and renal circulation, again incorporating molecular information and illustrations. There follow informative chapters on current nephron physiology.

The second section contains a long chapter on body volume and outstanding chapters on water metabolism and potassium. This section overlaps parts of the first section, although a more clinical approach is stressed.

The third section covers the pathogenesis of renal disease. There is an excellent chapter on acute renal failure. The chapter on pathogenesis of glomerular disease is extensive but again is too detailed for the clinician. However, there are many outstanding chapters covering clinical topics such as glomerulonephritis, tubular disorders, stone disease, hypertension in pregnancy and renal carcinoma. The chapter on radiologic assessment is exemplary and contains many useful illustrations.

The fourth section is devoted to the pathophysiology of renal disease. It deals largely with hypertension, uremia and its sequelae, proteinuria and the effects of aging.

The last section contains an exceptional chapter on the immunobiology of transplantation that is up to date, well organized and well illustrated.

This *tour de force* about the kidney is contemporary and comprehensive. Generally, it is readable, although some chapters contain too much detail. Its strength lies in its marriage of physiology, including molecular biology and genetics, with clinical topics.

It will find a place in hospital libraries and will be of value to urologists and surgeons interested in current physiologic and clinical information about the kidney.

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PEDIATRIC UROLOGY FOR THE GENERAL UROLOGIST. Topics in Clinical Urology Series. Edited by Jack S. Elder. 228 pp. Illust. Igaku-Shoin Medical Publishers Inc., New York. 1996. \$109. ISBN 0-89640-280-0

This text is directed to urologists with a broad field of interest who encounter pediatric problems as a small percentage of their practice. A manpower survey of the Canadian Urological Association recently showed that pediatric urologic problems make up a small part of the workload for the majority of urologists practising in Canada. Only 12 urologists in the country devote a large portion of their practice to this limited field.

In this book, Dr. Elder and a respected slate of pediatric urologists and specialists review common urologic problems encountered in children. They do this in a practical, well-defined and organized manner. Each author has addressed his or her area of clinical challenge in a comprehensive, detailed fashion. The clinical problems addressed include hematuria, enuresis, daytime incontinence problems of the prepuce and the contentious issue of circumcision. Voiding dysfunction, urinary tract infection and primary vesicoureteral reflux are well handled. Antenatal hydronephrosis is reviewed,

and appropriate recommendations for further investigation and treatment are presented. This area is without doubt the fastest evolving clinical area in pediatric urology. The authors have presented it clearly, succinctly and in a form that will be an excellent guide for clinicians.

The approach of each chapter is one of a basic summary of pathophysiology and diagnostic changes with a good overview of medical and surgical treatment options. The authors present this in a manner that provides up-to-date information for the practising surgeon. They have included current references should the clinician wish to acquire more in-depth information on the subject.

Some of the large urology texts do have excellent sections devoted to pediatric urology, but this small book gives the clinician a ready reference. It provides excellent, focussed guidance for pediatricians, surgeons, radiologists and paramedical workers who may wish a more concise treatise on pediatric urologic problems than those provided by larger, more comprehensive texts. This book will be a valuable addition to any hospital library.

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SOFT TISSUE RECONSTRUCTION IN THE UPPER EXTREMITY. Robin R. Richards. 314 pp. Illust. Churchill-Livingstone Inc., New York. 1995. \$99. ISBN 0-443-08926-4

Written by an experienced upper extremity surgeon, this book fills a void that exists in the surgical literature — that of surgery involving the soft tissues of the upper extremity.

The text is divided into five sections: an introduction that is devoted to basic principles of soft-tissue structure, function and healing after surgical intervention; thoracoscaphular disorders; glenohumeral joint; elbow; and wrist. Each section is subdivided into a total of 18 chapters.

Although the primary focus of the book is soft-tissue reconstruction, appropriate attention is paid to various skeletal procedures, which are an integral part of the reconstruction after soft-tissue injury. For example, there is an excellent section on glenohumeral arthrodesis as a treatment for flail shoulder after brachial plexus injury.

An important advantage of this book is that it is organized and written by a single author, so that much of the repetition seen in multiauthored texts is avoided. Richards offers a practical approach to clinical problems based on a thorough knowledge of the literature and extensive

personal clinical experience. Thus, rather than providing a comprehensive review of all procedures available to deal with a specific problem, Richards focuses on his approach to a variety of injuries and reconstructive problems in the upper extremity in a step-by-step fashion.

The book is superbly illustrated, with accurate black-and-white figures and an abundance of clinical photographs. These include intraoperative pictures, follow-up clinical views and photomicrographs of appropriate soft-tissue specimens. Each section contains a careful description of diagnostic techniques, conservative treatment for common problems and the selection of patients for surgery. Having been one of Dr. Richards' pupils, I can state that the pragmatic approach illustrated clearly in this text is similar to his approach when dealing with patients. This results in an understandable and reproducible system for those

interested in pursuing upper extremity reconstructive surgery.

Dr. Richards has written a number of salient articles on upper extremity reconstruction, including shoulder arthrodesis, elbow flexorplasty and reconstruction after upper extremity nerve injury. These sections in his book are particularly useful.

This book has few drawbacks. However, it is clearly not an exhaustive review of available techniques or a comprehensive textbook. Its compact size and reasonable price should make it accessible to all surgeons and surgical trainees with an interest in upper extremity surgery. I highly recommend it.

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