

Oral cancer

Oral Cancer: Epidemiology, Etiology and Pathology. Ed. by Colin Smith, Jens Pindborg and W. H. Binnie. Pp. ix + 106. Illustrated. R183,30. USA: Hemisphere. 1990.

The book is based upon papers presented at a conference on oral cancer held at the Royal Dental College, Copenhagen, during 1984, under the auspices of the International Union Against Cancer. However, recent advances have been incorporated into the text, which is now generally representative of current knowledge and understanding of the subject. Although the text is brief, it is filled with a wealth of information analysed critically by recognised authorities in the field.

The authors highlight those aspects of oral cancer that have been subject to different and sometimes conflicting interpretations. Surprisingly, this includes the designation of which lesions represent oral, pharyngeal or salivary cancers. Interestingly, when all cancers, except skin, are considered, oral and pharyngeal cancers rank fourth in men and sixth in women, with an estimated 233 000 and 107 000 new cases respectively each year.

While the multifactorial aetiology of the disease is recognised, factors such as tobacco, alcohol, syphilis, oral sepsis, iron deficiency, chronic candidiasis, viral infection and immune competence are discussed individually. The need for further study of these aetiological agents, jointly and severally, is emphasised. The combinations and interrelationship of the carcinogens, mutagens, initiators and promoters may prove more informative of the populations at risk.

Specific attention is also given to the immunological and biochemical methods being used to establish relationships between properties of tumour tissue and their prognosis. These tests include profiles of keratin polypeptides, carcino-embryonic antigens, carbohydrate residues, basement membrane-associated substances and inflammatory cell phenotypes.

The authors discuss the correlation between the histopathology of oral tumours, and their behaviour as well as their staging and grading. Areas for future research are suggested.

Black and white photomicrographs are perhaps the only weak feature of an otherwise superbly documented publication, which is strongly recommended to all serious students of the subject.

L. S. Maresky

HPV and cervical cancer

Human Papillomavirus and Cervical Cancer. Ed. by N. Munoz, F. X. Bosch and O. M. Jensen. Pp. xii + 155. Illustrated. France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. 1989.

This publication is a report of the multidisciplinary meeting held in Copenhagen in March 1988 under the auspices of the International Agency for Research on Cancer in Copenhagen. As such it is an excellent discussion on the main aims of this meeting which were: 'How to obtain better evidence on the epidemiological

evidence for a link between human papillomavirus (HPV) and cervical cancer'.

All eight chapters are well written and easy to read, and summarise a great deal of the evidence available implicating the HPV link with cervical cancer. Of particular value is the chapter by J. M. Kaldor on 'Measurement error' in epidemiological studies of HPV and cancer, which points out the pitfalls in such epidemiological studies. Also of great value are the suggestions for future research into this very important topic, considering that it is the commonest cancer in women in the RSA.

Not unexpectedly, the most recent developments in virology and molecular biology, and in particular gene amplification by polymerase chain reaction, are not detailed but this may be explained by the recent emergence of this technique.

In summary, this small volume represents an excellent synopsis of the present state of knowledge on the aetiological role of the HPV in the causation of cervical cancer.

B. Bloch

Child health

Child Health in a Multicultural Society. Ed. by John Black. Pp. 75. Illustrated. £7 (including postage). London: BMJ. 1989. (Available also from Libriger Book Distributors).

The National Health Service of Great Britain goes as far as any in the Western World to providing equitable services for all sections of society, and nowhere is this seen to better effect than in the comprehensive health care of children. Despite the excellence of these services, there are still enduring social and economic disparities with inevitable effects on the health of children from poor families, a large proportion of whom are to be found among ethnic minority groups.

Immigrant families in the UK come largely from Asia, the Mediterranean and Aegean, China and Vietnam, the Caribbean and Africa. Each group is different in terms of genetic make-up, geographical origins and cultural and dietary practices. This humane and sensitive little book aims to improve services to these groups, by familiarising professionals with these differences. It was compiled from a popular series of articles in the *British Medical Journal*, which appeared 5 years ago.

There is an interesting account of the emigration patterns of these peoples, where the various ethnic religious and cultural groupings have settled in England, and their dietary preferences. There are succinct descriptions of the genetic disorders that may be encountered — β -thalassaemia, sickle-cell anaemia, lactase and G6PD deficiency being the most important, as well as of the many infections that may have been brought in. The frequency of cousin marriages among Asians makes hereditary disorders particularly common in such communities.

This book will be of limited interest outside the British Isles, but should be available in libraries as a rapid and painless source of information on ethnic cultures, customs and complaints.

M. A. Kibel

Merck manual of geriatrics

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Merck Manual of Geriatrics. Ed. by William B. Abrams and Andrew J. Fletcher. Pp. xxii + 1267. Illustrated. R14,50. USA: Merck. 1990.

The eagerly awaited *Merck Manual of Geriatrics* is now available. The list of contributors contains some of the seminal names in geriatric medicine in North America and beyond. A number of authors from disciplines outside geriatrics, including health professions allied to medicine, reminds us not only that geriatrics is firmly rooted in clinical practice but also of its holistic, team-oriented nature.

The demographic imperative so clearly enunciated in the title, as well as the highly professional presentation of this work, should go a long way towards convincing sceptics of the utility of geriatric medicine in the practice of our art today. Demography, geriatric assessment, common disorders in the elderly, the value of respite care, assessing the need for institutional care, safe preparation for surgery, and the benefits, risks and practical application of exercise are just a few of the many relevant topics considered in great detail in a thoroughly reader-friendly style. Organ systems are very thoroughly covered, and although it is difficult to assess all this material in advance of consulting the book, with specific problems, the content and style in a number of conditions commonly encountered in geriatric practice inspire confidence.

Particularly with regard to demographic and legal issues, the book is written predominantly for a North American readership but is underpinned by universal principles and should therefore find worldwide appeal. The section on clinical pharmacology could have contained more detail, and in attempting to cover organ systems in a way applicable to geriatric medicine, some useful practical detail is inevitably lost. But this is a criticism that must be levelled at most current textbooks of geriatric medicine.

This book will clearly be kept current by new editions from time to time, and it should thus represent a signal and ongoing service to the elderly and their carers, and a definitive reference source for years to come.

P. de V. Meiring

Liver disease

Progress in Liver Diseases. Vol 9. Ed. by Hans Popper and Fenton Schaffner. Pp. xv + 750. Illustrated. R110. England: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1990.

This volume was organised before the illness of Hans Popper, and since he passed away in 1988, is in fact dedicated to his memory. Hans Popper may be rightly considered the father of modern hepatology. He wrote the third chapter entitled 'The relation of mesenchymal cell products to hepatic epithelial systems', and many aspects of this book bear his imprint. His own chapter is a little disjointed since it attempts to connect a series of unrelated observations, but it crackles with new ideas. Popper details postulated sites of intracellular signals between cells and the nature of signals between hepatocytes and other cells in the absence of receptive pathways. His hypotheses deriving from this chapter suggest a role for bile ductular cells in hepatocyte function, polarity and viability. He suggests that leukotrienes are responsible for the bile ductular proliferation seen in several forms of cholestatic liver injury.

The many chapters in this volume are derived from 75 contributors worldwide, a veritable 'Who's Who' of modern hepatology. These chapters range from aspects of 3-dimensional structure of the liver to postoperative problems in management of liver transplantations. There are wonderful chapters on acute reactions of the liver in inflammation, aspects of auto-immunity in liver disease, and updates on hepatitis A, hepatitis B, the delta agent and hepatitis E. There are separate chapters detailing the pathology of the liver in HIV infection and giving clinical directions for investigation of liver disease in patients with AIDS. There are chapters for radiologists, including magnetic resonance imaging of liver neoplasms and applications of this technique in experimental models. There are sections for gastro-enterologists, for geriatricians, weans, epidemiologists and for general physicians.

With the increasing costs of journals and textbooks, this is a reasonably priced book, well worth several hours perusal and reading. I wholeheartedly recommend it to anybody interested in

hepatology, gastro-enterology, aspects of molecular biology and basic science. Although not a comprehensive textbook, it does indicate new research directions and where the action is in modern hepatology.

S. C. Robson

Clinical dietetics and nutrition

Clinical Dietetics and Nutrition. 3rd ed. Ed. by F. P. Antia. Pp. xvi + 438. Illustrated. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1989.

Medical practitioners are increasingly recognising their need for nutritional expertise. This updated text, written in a most readable way, covers a vast field with a concise and most practical approach. It is divided into three major and very relevant sections. The first section on nutrition discusses all nutrients individually with comments on deficiency, toxicity and associated disorders. An up-to-date summary on some trace elements is included. The second section on foods includes seventeen major categories of generally eaten foods and covers both nutritional aspects and effects of processing. It refers to some tropical eating practices and dishes familiar to the author who is resident in Bombay. In the third section — clinical dietetics — over 30 diseases requiring therapeutic diets are discussed, as well as special needs of various stages of the life cycle.

Unfortunately, as the subject content in this book is vast, the approach is largely superficial. It is appropriate only for the practitioner who wants a quick grasp of a nutrition-related subject. For the dietitian, the inclusion of Indian dishes is an interesting bonus but the information does not meet her needs. For the layman, it is generally a readable and informative book although the inclusion of several menu-items specified only as 'low protein dessert'; or — on an egg-free diet! — 'chocolate cake', without the appropriate recipes will be a daunting challenge for any reader.

Joan Huskisson

Atlas of human anatomy

Wolf-Heidegger's Atlas of Human Anatomy. Ed. by H. F. Frick, B. Kummer and R. V. Putz. Pp. viii + 599. £60. Basel: Karger. 1990.

From the moment of taking this book in one's hands, the word that comes to mind is 'quality'. The weight, the cover, the paper, and the whole feel of the book bespeak this attribute. But it is very difficult when reviewing a book such as this to avoid comparisons with other works in the genre. Nevertheless an attempt was made to evaluate the publication objectively.

The first edition of this *Atlas* appeared in 1954 and since then it has undergone some major changes. In this, the 4th edition, an extra chapter, 'Systemic anatomy', has been added, the chapters have been rearranged according to systemic and topographic anatomy, and the drawings have been updated and made more complete.

The book will be a delight to the physician and the anatomist as well as to the medical student. The illustrations are generally in muted tones, lacking the somewhat flamboyant character of other atlases, but this does not deleteriously influence the clarity and definition of the drawings. The labelling nomenclature is taken from the *Nomina Anatomica* and descriptions of the various figures appear in English, German and Latin at the bottom of each page.

The anatomical drawings are supplemented by photographs, radiographs, and computed and magnetic-resonance tomographs. Radiological images are often difficult to interpret in print form, but not so these. They are either accompanied by well-labelled line drawings, or are themselves clearly labelled.

At the beginning of each section, a full list of the illustrations in that section is provided, and a table of contents gives a list of sections at the beginning of the book.

A detailed subject index at the end of the book is in the three languages previously mentioned. It is well-constructed and indexed, enabling one to find even the levator labii superioris alaeque nasi easily, provided one notes that the numbers in the index refer to the figures, not the pages.

The price of the book might put one off, but this is a book for life, and well worth the expense.

F. Sanders

Health system decentralisation

Health System Decentralization. Ed. by A. Mills, J. P. Vaughan, D. L. Smith and I. Tabibzadeh. Pp. 151. Illustrated. SFr. 26. Geneva: World Health Organisation. 1990.

The book, *Health System Decentralization*, published by the WHO is edited by eminent academics from the London School of Economics and Political Science and by officers in the WHO in Geneva. It is short (consisting of 151 pages) and has three parts.

Part 1 considers the concepts and issues of decentralisation while Part 2 outlines a number of community case studies ranging from a description of experiences and services in Botswana through to Yugoslavia. This section includes developing countries in Africa and South America as well as developed countries in Europe and the antipodes.

The case studies are illustrative and instructive and amplify the mechanics of practical implementation of decentralisation discussed in Part 1.

In Part 3, Professor Vaughan draws lessons from the case studies and from experience. There are not many tables and diagrams in the book, but those that are given are clear and easily understood.

A great deal is currently being discussed about decentralisation, devolution, delegation and deconcentration concepts which the authors define and explain, both in developed and developing countries. South Africa is no exception. We face a barrage of jargon and terms from various health officials. The definition and explanations are lacking and most disconcerting, so are the implications. The book is, therefore, timely. Tighter definition of terms with lessons learnt from the case studies will focus attention on the meaning of these concepts and more important, of the practicalities in implementation.

The book will have a limited appeal to the medical profession but is a 'must' for all health officials and especially for those involved in health service management and administration. It will serve as a useful adjunct to health planners and decision makers who grapple with the practical difficulties in implementing health care. It will be of particular relevance to South Africa at this juncture.

I recommend the book as essential reading for all community health professionals.

J. M. L. Klopper

Handbook of occupational medicine

Handbook of Occupational Medicine. Ed. by Robert J. McCunney. Pp. xxiii + 510. Illustrated. Boston: Little, Brown. 1988.

The editor states in the preface that the aim of this handbook was to provide an overview of many related disciplines with a strong emphasis on the practical application of basic principles.

In a handy format this book contains some useful information but it is clearly written for physicians who practise in the United States of America and who are involved with worker populations and industries there. There are very few references to sources elsewhere and the recommendations for further reading are similarly restricted. For example, under occupational epidemiology no mention is made of the excellent WHO publication on this subject (*WHO Regional Publications European Series No. 20*, 1986).

There are some good, short chapters on occupational disease recognition (Ch. 4) and on skin disorders (Ch. 13). Particularly useful are the appendices A, F and G, which list carcinogens, health effects of common substances and neurological manifestations of absorption of toxic substances. There is also an excellent diagram and description of occupational history-taking and of diagnosing occupational, work-related disease (Ch 5). This chapter has an excellent appendix listing agents, conditions and related occupations. There are some weak chapters too!

The book has been 'approved' by the American College of Occupational Medicine but it is not recommended for occupational health practitioners who work outside of the USA.

J. T. Mets

Leukaemia

Leukaemia. 5th ed. Ed. by Edward S. Henderson and T. Andrew Lister. Pp. vii + 821. Illustrated. R110. Kent: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1990.

The 1st edition of *Leukaemia*, edited by the late Dr William Dameshek and Dr Frederick Gunz, appeared in the early 1960s at a time when leukaemia was a universal death sentence. Little was known about the pathophysiology of the disease, bone marrow transplantation did not exist and chemotherapy, certainly as it is understood today, was awaiting discovery. Subsequently the various editions of this important book have chronicled an explosive increase in knowledge, with its application to understanding of such things as aetiology, and led to great improvements in diagnosis and management. As early as the 4th edition it had become clear that increasing specialisation by serious students of this disease necessitated a changed format to a multi-author volume. But the original concept of this book, neither an encyclopaedia nor a standard text, but rather a specific monograph for those with special interest in leukaemia, has been largely maintained so that it remains both practical and easy to use.

Compared with earlier editions, much of the content has been reorganised, and most of it completely rewritten and up-dated. Many new names appear among the contributors. Frederick Gunz has handed over the senior authorship to Edward S. Henderson, while Andrew Lister has brought some further balance by adding a European flavour to what has, in the past, been largely a North American contribution.

The last decade has been particularly challenging, a great deal of relevant information being contributed by wider use of immunological and genetic techniques. In addition, the study of oncogenes reflects the ever-increasing extension of cellular and molecular biology to the unravelling of those disturbances in haematopoiesis that are manifest as the disease we currently call leukaemia.

In general terms the book is of a high standard, which speaks well for the editors' efforts to keep repetition to a minimum. The contents are organised in a logical way that deals with all the major aspects of aetiology, diagnosis, signs, symptoms and management, not only of acute and chronic leukaemia but also of the myelodysplastic syndromes. It would be invidious to single out any particular chapter since they are uniformly up to date and of a high standard.

Dr Gunz's introduction to leukaemia in the past is an excellent historical review and sets the scene for the sections that follow. Five additional major subdivisions deal with the nature of the disease, aetiology, diagnosis, treatment and complications. Readers are systematically taken through pathophysiology and the role basic sciences have played in bringing our understanding of the disease to its present status.

Aetiology remains unproved, but current understanding of infectious agents, particularly the retroviruses, as well as other environmental factors, most notably ionising radiation, as well as chemicals, are lucidly reviewed. Clinical manifestation and diagnostic aspects are clearly covered in two comprehensive chapters. Much of the book is, understandably, devoted to treatment, from currently available cytotoxic drugs to bone marrow transplantation. Both acute and chronic leukaemias are considered, and lymphoid contrasted with myeloblastic variants. Reviews are included on the myelodysplastic syndromes, variants of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia and adult T-cell leukaemia. The final section, which deals with complications, outlines many areas now recognised to contribute to improved remission rates and thereby ultimately to survival. The latter include the management of infection, disturbances in haemostasis and involvement of the central nervous system, as a sanctuary from conventional doses of cytotoxic drugs.

Of ever-increasing importance is the recognition that psychosocial complications play an important role in the comprehensive management of the patient. It follows that the authors strongly advocate management by a multidisciplinary health care team. A chapter that deals with these various problems is excellent reading, not only for people treating the disease but also for nurses and the paramedical professions.

Leukaemia contains a wealth of information, is well indexed, references are current and presentation is of a uniformly high standard. Any library, department, or even individuals involved in the management of these haematological malignancies would be poorer for not having Dameshek and Gunz's book readily to hand. It can be recommended without reservation.

P. Jacobs