

## Book Reviews

### **OTITIS MEDIA IN INFANTS AND CHILDREN**

Bluestone and Klein (eds.), W.B. Saunders. 1995. ISBN 0721648185. Price £45.00.

This book has been written by authors whose department has produced vast quantities of research and observations on otitis media. As a result the impressions and judgements formed are based on years of experience.

The first chapter on definitions, terminology and classification sets the scene and provides a good basic outline for what lies ahead. The chapter on anatomy is detailed and comprehensive. The third chapter covers physiology, pathophysiology and pathogenesis. This is an excellent chapter with a wealth of both clinical and experimental data. This is followed by sections on microbiology and immunology which again are well covered and supported by literature references. The chapter on diagnosis is of value to both family practitioners and specialists. Emphasis is placed on pneumatic otoscopy, something very much under-used by primary care doctors and a practice of great value. There is possibly a little too much emphasis on tympanometry. Inadequate emphasis on the physical examination of the ear and the effect of wax in the external meatus may lead primary care physicians to feel secure that tympanometry will provide all the answers. The need for a good auroscope and competent examination technique of the ear is more important and could have been stressed more. Tympanocentesis for acute otitis is subject to different criteria in the United States and is not commonly performed in the UK. The assessment of eustachian tube function and dysfunction is also not quite as clear-cut as implied.

The chapter on the management of otitis is the longest, with an extensive literature review. There is possibly too much pharmacology and controversy still exists over the role of antimicrobials for secretory otitis and chemoprophylaxis for recurrent acute otitis.

The final chapter deals with complications and sequelae. Fortunately the intratemporal complications are seen less frequently in developed countries but are unfortunately still too common in the developing world. Trainees in developed countries still need to be aware of the potential risks of middle ear disease. There is increasing evidence that children with recurrent acute otitis or persistent secretory otitis perform less well in tests of language and speech than their disease-free peers. In addition data suggests that delayed or impaired development may be an important sequelae of otitis media. A good overview of complications, including hearing loss, perforations, adhesive otitis,

cholesteatoma and tympanosclerosis, is also provided. Finally the recommendation that tympanoplasty be offered at a younger age (six years and over) is welcome and is probably the practice of most serious otologic surgeons.

Overall this is an excellent book. It is a must for the departmental library and would be a very useful book for the primary care physicians to have on the shelf.

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Consultant ENT Surgeon

### **COCHLEAR IMPLANTS IN CHILDREN**

A.S. Uziel, M. Mondain, eds., Karger. 1995. ISBN 3805560958. Price SFr 199/DM 238.

Cochlear implantation is now a firmly established method of treating profoundly deaf children. This edition of *Advances in Oto-Rhino-Laryngology* addresses cochlear implantation in children and should be of interest both to the general reader as well as to those involved in the management of such children. All aspects of implantation are considered, commencing with an overview of the ethical issues, and how these have evolved or resolved with time. This chapter would certainly set the historical context of implantation for those not aware of the dilemmas raised by the deaf community.

The format of the book is logical and takes the reader through the selection process, the surgery in all its aspects and then deals with rehabilitation, ending with the potential future requirements for the procedure. The selection process has been divided into the general criteria employed for selection and a useful chapter on the reasons for rejection. Radiological assessment, in particular, has been well covered especially the topic of which method of imaging to choose and why. The arguments for computerized tomograph, the balance between the detailed evaluation obtained on bone windows against the fact that a diagnosis may be missed in 14 per cent of scans is discussed. The chapter on imaging methods of the future, especially the potential of positron emission tomography (PET) with its ability to relate to functioning auditory cortex was well written. Inevitably this subject probably raises more questions than the chapter answered, but it was also one of the most interesting discussions.

The chapters on surgical technique encompassed a wide range of issues in a concise fashion. Generalized pitfalls, together with specific problems such as Mondini deformity and problems with ossified cochlea following meningitis were all covered well. Specific surgical detail