

Basal Ganglia and Thalamus in Health and Movement Disorders is written with a uniformly high quality. It is readable, current and the work presented is of a high standard. Although proceedings of consensus meetings and gatherings of "experts" have earned a dubious reputation among practising clinicians, meetings such as this international workshop offer a rare opportunity for leading lights in a field to share their current research, to form alliances across borders and to stimulate new arenas of thought. In this respect, these proceedings offer the practising neurologist, neurosurgeon and neurophysiologist a glimpse at the state of the basal ganglia and demonstration of how far our understanding has evolved over the past 10 years as a result of clinical imperatives.

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NEUROLOGY AND MEDICINE. 1999. Edited RAC Hughes, GD Perkin. Published by BMJ Books. 415 pages. C\$66.15 approx.

This volume contains a collection of essays which have appeared in the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry* on a variety of aspects of medical neurology. The contributors are an outstanding group of experts in the field and include P.K. Thomas on diabetes in the nervous system, Michael Aminoff on chorea and dystonia and Patricia Moore on the neurology of vasculitides. There are chapters on the neurology of the respiratory, renal, hepatic and dermatological systems.

The contributors are international and include experts from the United Kingdom, the United States and from Australia. It is aptly stated in the foreword that it is not intended to be encyclopaedic but the volume is easy to read, and as a quick reference for the neurologist who needs to refresh his memory on the various aspects of medical neurology, it is reasonable value. There are areas which one might have expected to have been covered in such a volume, notably metabolic encephalopathies. However, this useful volume thoughtfully covers the chosen selected topics. It was published in 1999 so parts of it are somewhat out of date, such as the chapter on stroke but there are still good general principles to be found in the volume. This would be a useful addition to the shelves of the busy internist or the neurological consultant.

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HANDBOOK OF MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS. Third Edition. 2001. Edited by Stuart D. Cook. Published by Marcel Dekker, Inc. 687 pages. C\$292.50 approx.

This third edition of this text expands upon the recent developments in the understanding and treatment of multiple sclerosis (MS). Topics covered include the epidemiology, genetics, the putative pathogenesis, to the clinical presentations and current diagnostic tools. Current options for treatment are discussed, ranging from symptomatic approaches to disease modifying agents to ongoing potential therapeutic targets. The book is divided into three main sections that include the etiopathogenesis, the clinical and pathological changes and the therapeutic considerations.

The chapters are written by different authors, who are known to be experts in the field of MS. It is well referenced, with a varying

depth of coverage of a topic depending on the different authors. Overall, the discussions are generally abbreviated and concise. More detailed discussions are found in the basic science chapters discussing the auto-immune hypothesis and animal models. The text does provide a good summary of the epidemiological history and update as to the different diagnostic tools including the MRI. The results of the clinical trials in the treatment of relapsing-remitting disease are thoroughly discussed, but the biases of the different authors are readily apparent (such as the interferon dosage controversy), especially in the chapters discussing the newer disease modifying agents. Sections on the cognitive impairment and newer MRI techniques are notably included in this text. Inevitably, other topical highlights (such as the McDonald criteria for MS) or the more recent evidence and advances in different treatment issues over the past year are not presented, reflecting the rapidly evolving pace of this field. However, future experimental therapies are included at the latter chapters of the book, discussing the rationale and the empirical results from preliminary data thus far.

Overall, this text is a good up-to-date reference for clinicians, residents and other health care professionals, who are interested or involved in the medical management of patients with MS. It is well written, concise, with good references. The text includes black and white photomicrographs and other graphics including tables, graphs and illustrations that are well laid out. There is a tendency to have some repetition of topics as the different chapters are written by different authors discussing overlapping areas, but this does not detract from the overall quality and usefulness of this text.

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MANAGEMENT OF DEMENTIA. 2001. Edited by Simon Lovestone, Serge Gauthier. Published by Martin Dunitz. 168 pages. C\$55.70 approx.

This is an excellent pocket reference for those who wish to treat Alzheimer's disease. Lovestone and Gauthier are leading authorities in the field, one a psychiatrist, the other a neurologist, and both have had biochemistry background which is a good credential for expertise with pharmacological agents. The management of Alzheimer's disease has become an important issue not only for psychiatrists and neurologists, but geriatricians, general practitioners, and general internists because the disease is so prevalent and now we have fairly effective therapies. Management, of course, includes not only treatment but also diagnosis and differential diagnosis, and this little book deals with these issues in a compact yet comprehensive manner.

Behavioural and sleep disturbance in psychiatric symptoms in Alzheimer's disease are given specific treatment. Biomarkers, genetic testing, and treatment with cholinesterase inhibitors and disease modification agents are well covered. There is also a chapter on long-term care for the patient with dementia and at the end a special supplementary chapter on assessment scales including MMSE, MDS, ADAS-Cog, clock drawing, Behav-AD, Severe Impairment Battery (SIB), NPI, Cornell Scale for Depression, IDDD, the Bristol ADL, the GDS, FAST, CDR, the Burden Interview, and finally an appendix of screening, assessment and management algorithms. The book is well-indexed, has ample references, and recommended reading lists.

This handy pocket guide will be useful for many residents and clinicians, especially in those specialties that treat Alzheimer's disease. It is a worthy addition to departmental and hospital libraries and, predictably, will be used quite frequently.

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THE NEUROLOGY OF VISION. CONTEMPORARY NEUROLOGY SERIES. 2001. By Johnathan D. Trobe. Published by Oxford University Press. 451 pages. C\$192.00 approx.

The Neurology of Vision is a recent addition to the Contemporary Neurology Series. The book is comprised of 20 chapters divided into six parts.

Part 1 provides an overview of the anatomy and physiology of human visual system. It reviews basic optics, retinal physiology, anatomy of the visual pathways from optic nerve to visual cortex, and the anatomy underlying visual integrative function. This part provides a quick review of clinically relevant basic science of the visual system.

Part 2 covers the symptoms of a failing visual system as manifestations of optical, retinocortical or visual integration disorders. Emphasis is placed on relating symptoms to anatomy and pathophysiology.

Part 3 provides an overview of the tests used to assess visual function including clinical methods, interpretation of automated perimetry and electrophysiological testing of the visual system. The text explains the rationale for each test, reviews testing methods, and provides an approach to interpretation of the tests.

Part 4 is concerned with specific disorders of the visual system and is organized topographically and subdivided according to etiology. The text provides a clear and concise overview of ocular and neurologic disorders that are important for the practicing neurologist and ophthalmologist to be aware of when assessing patients with visual symptoms. The signs and symptoms, pathophysiology and appropriate management of each disorder are reviewed. This section includes 60 color plates of fundus or fluorescein angiogram photographs with examples of common and important abnormalities. Boxes are used for rapid reference and summary as well as to emphasize important points. Tables provide important lists of information for rapid reference and are used effectively to contrast related disorders. Figures in this section include flow charts outlining suggested management of many of the disorders covered in this book. Text is complemented with examples of neuroimaging showing lesions of the visual system and figures illustrating relevant anatomy. Finally, this section also provides instruction in clinical methods used to assess for disorders of visual integrative function such as Balint's syndrome.

Part 5 provides an overview of nonorganic visual disturbances. Symptoms suggestive of nonorganic visual disturbance are reviewed. Instruction is provided in clinical methods used to detect nonphysiologic deficits of the visual system. There is a brief overview of pertinent psychiatric disorders.

The last section of the text provides multiple-choice questions based upon cases that allow readers to test their knowledge of the material present in the preceding parts. Answers are provided with adequate discussion.

In summary, this book provides an excellent overview of

common or important neurologic and ophthalmic disorders that result in visual disturbance. It provides a practical guide for clinicians. I highly recommend this book for practicing neurologists, ophthalmologists and residents training in these disciplines.

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MERRITT'S NEUROLOGY HANDBOOK. 2001. Tenth Edition. Edited by Pietro Mazzoni, Lewis P. Rowland. Published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. 528 pages. C\$70.79 approx.

The major purpose of this pocket sized text book, as stated in the preface, is to provide a concise, portable version of the essential information contained in the Tenth Edition of Merritt's Neurology Text. In other words, if you want a briefer, more portable version of the latest and excellent edition of Merritt's Neurology Text, this is the book for you.

The handbook has several important features. First of all, it has a most convenient two-page list of abbreviations, which will probably save readers much frustration. It has a very detailed table of contents, which in fact occupies the first six pages of the book. The first two sections of the book deal with symptoms of neurologic disorders and diagnostic tests in neurology. These are then followed by the usual disease-orientated sections dealing with infections of the nervous system, cerebral vascular diseases, peripheral neuropathies and other disorders. Finally, the book concludes with chapters on systemic diseases and general medicine, environmental neurology, which includes alcoholism and drug dependence, rehabilitation and a final chapter on ethical and legal guidelines.

As the authors state, this book is essentially a summary of the essential information contained in the longer parent textbook. As such, it is difficult to see who the handbook will actually be useful for. If you are going to read a neurology text at your desk, you are much better off with the longer textbook, which itself is still quite short. If you wish to carry around a neurology book in the course of your daily work, the handbook is clearly much more convenient, but does not really seem to be a practical helpful book for everyday neurological work. For example, the short section on herpes simplex encephalitis does mention acyclovir, but like many sections of this book, does not supply any practical information such as drug dosages. The section on Parkinson's disease does name most of the useful drugs, but again the information is not specific enough to assist the clinician in the use of these drugs, especially the amateur clinician.

The section on migraine is rather peculiar, in that it states that the category of common migraine includes "tension headache", thereby ignoring most of the hard work in headache classification done in the last ten years. For migraine with aura, it states that focal symptoms are present in a small proportion of attacks, while mainstream thinking would indicate that, in fact, the great majority of migraine aura symptoms, if not all, are focal in nature, as opposed to premonitory symptoms.

In short, I do have reservations about this book. Perhaps it ties itself too slavishly to the parent textbook in terms of organisation. For example, one can question how useful a one page chapter on neuropsychological evaluation is in a portable book, which clinicians can carry at the front line. On the other hand, perhaps the book tries to target too wide an audience, as the preface states that it