

Neurosurgical Emergencies comprises two volumes and is one of the Neurosurgical Topics series published by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons. It gives a comprehensive and up to date account of the management of acute neurosurgical conditions.

The common neurosurgical emergencies such as subarachnoid and acute hydrocephalus are all covered as well as rarer topics such as pituitary apoplexy. There is not a specific chapter on closed head injury which I think would have been useful but instead the various aspects—for example, intracranial monitoring, haematomas and cerebral herniation—are covered in separate sections. The chapters on hydrocephalus and shunt malfunction contain useful practical techniques. I thought that some of the algorithms are unnecessarily complex but those relating to the management of spinal injury are helpful. The book is well indexed and the references are comprehensive but not always up to date. It also contains a multiple choice self test.

On the down side, it is not clear why two volumes are necessary as each volume is relatively slim. Although summaries are present in most of the chapters they are not universal and I think numbered key points would be a useful addition. There is also discrepancy in chapter length. For example, more pages are devoted to the rare, albeit interesting, topic of acute bony decompression of the optic and facial nerves than to that most fundamental of neurological emergencies, subarachnoid haemorrhage. More specifically, several sections of the text discuss pre-CT burrholes which rarely have a place in modern neurosurgical management. The chapter on emergency surgery for stroke is weak with prophylaxis of stroke and its inclusion in this book is surprising.

Overall, I think these volumes are a useful guide to the management of neurosurgical emergencies and I would strongly recommend them to neurosurgeons trainees.

PETER HUTCHINSON


Progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP) has only been recognized as a separate entity since the work of Steele, Richardson, and Olszewski in the 1960s. This book has been aimed at a clinical audience, and its title would indicate a comprehensive coverage of the major aspects of the disease. The book follows a conference on PSP held in Barcelona in 1992, thus many of the contributions are the proceedings of that meeting and tend to reflect research interests rather than clinical data. It is a useful distillation of the most recent work in this disease.

Those with some familiarity with the literature on PSP will no doubt recognize many of the contributors, and their chapters. The chapter on PSP held in Barcelona in 1992, and a number of other chapters have been duplicated from Litvan and Agid's book on PSP published in the same year. In addition, it is apparent from some of the research produced that correlation between clinical or investigative findings and pathological confirmation of the disease has not been achieved. The chapter dealing with vascular progressive supranuclear palsy suffers particularly in this regard. The chapters dealing with pathology and epidemiology are very comprehensive. Although the book purports to address therapy, this section only warrants 16 pages, and concerns two small clinical trials of muscarinic and 2-adrenergic agents. Other agents are not fully discussed. A more serious omission is the lack of any reference to drug therapies such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and the frequent co-occurrence of depressive symptoms. In contrast, although its relevance to practising clinical neurologists is somewhat unclear, the section relating to the levels of various neurotransmitters in brain and cerebrospinal fluid is comprehensive.

A few of the chapters are peppered with frequent typographical and grammatical errors which interfere with the reading of what are otherwise learned descriptions of important work.

Lastly, this book lacks a succinct summary of all the work by the various authors which is unfortunate given the numerous areas of expertise attributable to each.

THOMAS ESMONDE
Progressive Supranuclear Palsy: Diagnosis, Pathology and Therapy

Thomas Esmonde

*J Neural Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1995 59: 108
doi: 10.1136/jnnp.59.1.108-a

Updated information and services can be found at:
http://jnnp.bmj.com/content/59/1/108.2.citation

**Email alerting service**

Receive free email alerts when new articles cite this article. Sign up in the box at the top right corner of the online article.

Notes

To request permissions go to:
http://group.bmj.com/group/rights-licensing/permissions

To order reprints go to:
http://journals.bmj.com/cgi/reprintform

To subscribe to BMJ go to:
http://group.bmj.com/subscribe/