
Most people with epilepsy experience the onset in childhood or adolescence. This welcome book of 37 chapters is written by 43 authors from the USA, and Michael Trimble is the first major newcomer of the nineties.

Growth in knowledge of pathophysiology is reviewed: brain structure, neural interconnections, ion channels, membranes and neurotransmitters, and molecular and pharmacological consequences of seizures. Congratulations are due to Dreifuss for a readable chapter on classification and to Freesky for a stimulating clinical chapter on non-epileptic paroxysmal disorders. The accounts of epidemiology, neurophysiological investigation and neuroimaging are compact although the last is sparsely illustrated. Good descriptions of many of the major epileptic syndromes conclude the first half.

Management is discussed in terms of drug therapy rather than educational care. There are differences between drugs used in the USA and in Europe. A chapter on new drugs is interesting. Some are not yet used in Europe.

There are chapters on epilepsy and IQ and on behavioural and cognitive aspects, there is little sense of the young person’s experience of epilepsy, the importance of the impact on the family or the high frequency of associated disabilities. Nonetheless, the book is clear, scholarly and well referenced.

IAN MCKINLAY


Don’t let the title of this book deceive you into believing this is a work devoted to neuropsychology or neuropsychiatry. It is very much a neurologist’s text, comprising 100 short sections on a variety of cerebral disorders, their recognition, significance and treatment. The main areas covered are frontal, parietal and temporal lobes as well as chapters on epilepsy, head injury, psychiatric disorders and movement disorders.

IAN MCKINLAY


This book covers the neurological manifestations of paediatric systemic diseases. It is suggested that it will complement the general paediatric textbook that deals mainly with symptomatic disease and the paediatric neurology textbook.

The aim is to assemble and summarise current knowledge and data. It is written specifically for the General Paediatrician, the Paediatric Specialist and the Neurologist.

The contents are arranged in the same way as standard paediatric textbooks listing common neurological complications (including sections on pathophysiology, neuropathology, clinical manifestations, and treatment) of nutritional deficiencies, rheumatic diseases, bacterial and viral infections, gastrointestinal and hepatobiliary diseases, renal diseases and endocrine diseases. Each chapter is followed by an extensive list of references. It is easy to read and informative and could certainly be a ready reference when one is presented with an unusual problem.

The forward states that in these days of technology child neurology remains one of the specialities where good clinical skills are important, as is a thorough knowledge of the general paediatrics. This book will go a considerable way to achieving these ideals.

MJ NORONHA


This multi-author text is about pseudo-seizures, other types of paroxysmal events such as syncope and night terrors, for example, receiving only passing reference. Many chapter authors begin by suggesting that between 8% and 20% of those referred to special epilepsy units have non-epileptic seizures. However, a point that is not generally recognised in the book is the number of centres that such patients tend to visit, which will inflate the impression of the frequency of pseudo-seizures.

Some authors attempt to identify clinical criteria that might be useful in distinguishing true epileptic and pseudo-seizures from each other, most acknowledge the substantial degree of behavioural overlap. For example, seizures originating in the frontal lobe or supplementary motor area may have...