

## BOOK REVIEWS

*Multiple Sclerosis in Clinical Practice*, Stanley van den Noort and Nancy J. Holland, eds., pp. 234, 1999. Price \$34.95. ISBN 1-888799-25-0. Demos Medical Publishing, New York.

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is one of the leading causes of neurologic disability in young adults. Despite recent developments in medication for the prevention of exacerbation in relapsing–remitting MS, symptomatic treatment and interdisciplinary rehabilitation remain the most important part of the management of MS patients. During the last decade, our knowledge of the management of MS and all its associated problems has increased.

This book is edited and written by nearly 20 experienced MS carers. The book is designed for all physicians who manage the disease, emphasizing those therapies that can be used successfully by the non-MS specialist and indicating when referral is appropriate.

The book is divided into 13 chapters and covers the common symptoms and complications, such as fatigue, pain, bladder and bowel dysfunction, factors in mobility impairment and cognitive loss, seen at various stages of MS. It also has chapters on the primary care needs of MS patients and community resources. At the end, there is a 75-page appendix detailing medications commonly used in MS. This useful chapter lists the proper usage, precautions and possible side-effects for each drug. The book provides an up-to-date description of the management techniques of MS. Although partly written for physicians in North American healthcare systems, most of the treatment regimens are universal.

The book can be recommended for physicians as well as other healthcare professionals who meet and treat MS patients and their relatives.

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*Brainlash. Maximize Your Recovery From Mild Brain Injury*, 2nd ed., Gail L. Denton, ed., pp. 370, 1999. Price US\$24.95. ISBN 1-888799-37-4. Demos Medical Publishing, New York.

In 1991 Gail L. Denton was involved in an in-line skating accident and acquired a mild brain injury. This book is a document about her struggle to regain competence and control, and acquire new skills and a new identity. The book is also a guide for those in a similar situation, sharing both her own and some of her fellow patients' experiences during the different stages of improvement after their accidents. She also provides the reader with her webpage address, providing more personal information about herself.

The layout and format of the book are designed with the needs of persons with mild brain injury in mind: the fonts are slightly larger than usual and the layout is very easy on the eye. Through the webpage she also offers a tape to accompany the book for those who would prefer auditory to visual information. The chapters are well structured and short. This is not a book that you are supposed to read from A to Z. The idea is that each chapter can be read separately according to the needs and interests of the reader. The book is targeted not only at patients but also at therapists and general healthcare professionals who need more training in recognizing the symptoms and needs of patients with mild

head injuries. The author covers a large number of important issues in connection with recovery, such as changes in working capacity, driving skills, sex life, executive functions and litigation. She makes a number of good suggestions on how to handle fatigue, loss of energy, and the day-to-day fluctuations in capacity, concentration and pain. There are ideas and exercises for cognitive self-training. The book contains a number of useful addresses for the North American reader to obtain optimal help, support and care. The author describes her recovery from a mixed perspective of traditional rehabilitation, psychotherapeutic and some New Age ideas, the latter being perhaps more established in American culture than in Europe. I wondered how the European reader would react to these aspects of the book and asked some of my patients with mild head injuries, who have had similar experiences, for their comments. They said unanimously that they wished such a book had existed before, and they were very happy with the existence of such a book. Given the structure of the book, everybody can read the parts in which they are interested and find useful. The problems of patients with mild brain injury are general and the road to regaining competence seems to be long and difficult wherever you are.

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*Exercise and Circulation in Health and Disease*, Bengt Saltin, Niels Secher, Jere Mitchell and Robert Boushel, eds, pp. 360, 1999. Price \$44.50. ISBN 0-88011-632-3. Human Kinetics Europe, Leeds.

This book, which was initiated from a symposium held at the Danish Academy of Sciences, has the format of a textbook, and is intended for graduate students, but will be useful for anybody who wants a modern and comprehensive review of cardiovascular regulatory physiology. It also has special relevance for clinicians as a reference on cardiovascular function and regulation during exercise from an integrative point of view. It gives a thorough review of the function in the healthy state, in different diseases, and during various physical and environmental conditions. Of special interest is the historical outlook, as the symposium was held at the centennial of the first publication on cardiovascular regulation during exercise by the Swedish physiologist Erik Johansson in 1895.

Among the authors are a large number of the leading scientists in the field. There are chapters on coronary blood flow and cardiac haemodynamics, pulmonary circulation, cerebral blood flow and metabolism, muscle blood flow and its regulation, and oxygen transport in blood and mitochondria, to mention some of the basic physiological chapters. Cardiovascular regulation during hypoxia, cardiovascular regulation with endurance training, and the effect of ageing as chapters on various diseased states also have special clinical relevance. The book contains a large amount of information and could also serve as a reference guide in libraries at departments of rehabilitation medicine, especially for those involved in research on cardiovascular training and rehabilitation.

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