BOOK REVIEWS

Thoracolumbar Spine Fracture, Yishar Floman, Jean-Pierre C. Farcy & Claude Argenson, eds, pp. 537, 1993. Price $164.00. ISBN 0-7817-0049-3. Raven Press Ltd, New York.

Improved surgical techniques have aroused interest in a more active and aggressive approach to the treatment of spinal fractures. Conservative measures which have long been in use, and which no doubt serve a purpose, have to a certain extent been discarded. They are considered to be time-consuming, expensive, with an inverse cost/benefit ratio, too trying for the patient and too staff-demanding; and even if rehabilitation is begun simultaneously with the initiation of treatment the more active phase of the rehabilitation has to start later than if the patient had been operated on for his/her fracture.

Irrespective of the treatment chosen, certain aspects are essential. One of these is the necessity that the patient, whether neurologic impairment is present or not, should be the centre of a team approach. An interesting, but very important statement is made in this book: "The increasing sophistication of the various diagnostic, medical, surgical and rehabilitation techniques mandates not only the sharing of this knowledge among the various specialities managing these patients, but also the exchange of knowledge and comprehension among international experts." The latter part of this statement has certainly been applied in this book, as the different topics are treated by foremost representatives within the relevant fields involved. Despite the large number of authors, the presentation remains uniform, the language is both good and readable, and the depth of knowledge displayed gives each section great credibility. The book contains many illustrations—both schematic and more advanced—which contribute effectively to clarifying the text.

To sum up, this is a very readable textbook on a most complicated problem. It will serve its purpose well, as stated by the authors: "The book is aimed at orthopaedic surgeons, spine surgeons, neurosurgeons, physiatrists, and medical students."

Ian Goldie, M.D.
Professor

The User's Guide to Intermittent Catheterisation. Gillian Hunt, Robert Whitaker & Pippa Oakeshott, eds. pp. 48, 1993. Price £2.99. Family Doctor Publications Ltd, London.

This booklet is written jointly by a physician, a urologist and a G.P. and it is published in association with The British Medical Association. We are sure that this booklet will be very useful for our patients. It is simply written and with good illustrations.

Copies are available from Family Doctor Publications Ltd., P.O. Box 118, London WC2N 5BG, Great Britain.

Ed.

Anatomic Localization for Needle Electromyography. Steve R. Geiringer, ed, pp. 154, 1994. Price $28.95. ISBN 1-56053-068-5. Hanley & Belfus, Inc., Philadelphia, USA.

The practice of clinical electromyography is an exercise in the anatomy of muscles and peripheral nerves. This neuroanatomical information can be derived from anatomical atlases, neurological handbooks and anatomic guides for electromyographers. Steve R. Geiringer, associate professor of physical medicine and rehabilitation at Wayne State University in Detroit, has written a dedicated muscle atlas for needle EMG.

The book contains an illustration of each muscle, description of its innervation (nerve and root), patient position during the examination, needle localization, activation of muscle and notes on the muscles. The illustrations are clear and simple to understand. Most relevant limb muscles have been included in the book. The diaphragm, the anal sphincter and a few other non limb muscles are also included. The suggested examination techniques for the muscles are valid and useful.

The section on muscles on non limb muscles is brief, it includes only the anal sphincter, the diaphragm, to facial muscles, paraspinal muscles and the sternocleidomastoid muscle. This last section should be more detailed; among others muscles innervated by the trigeminal nerve (masseter and temporalis muscles) are missing. The abdominal muscles are not mentioned, although the different parts of the rectus abdominis muscle are helpful in low thoracic radiculopathies. The laryngeal and extraocular muscles have also been omitted. Hopefully they will be included in the second edition of the book.

This book is very similar to the "Anatomic guide for the electromyographer" by E. Delagi and A. Perotto, Charles C. Thomas, Springfield Illinois, 1981. Both books are excellent. However, I find Gereinger's book to be more concise and the techniques for some muscles, especially the serratus anterior muscle, more useful than the ones suggested by Delagi and Perotto.

In spite of the omission of some rarely examined muscles this is an excellent anatomic guide. Of the currently available anatomic EMG guides it is the one that I find most recommendable. It should be available in every EMG laboratory not far from the EMG equipment. Personally, I would like to have an electronic edition of this book integrated with the EMG software. It would be much less embarrassing to look for help on the computer screen than in a book in front of the patient.

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