

Book reviews

Textbook of Neonatology. Edited by N R C Robertson. Pp 907: £90.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1986.

Do not confuse this book with Dr Robertson's pocket manual of neonatal intensive care; this one is a large multi-author work on the newborn that compares favourably with the big American books, such as Shaffer's 'Disease of the newborn' or G Avery's 'Neonatology'. Without wishing to appear chauvinistic, at last we have a major British book covering the whole of neonatal paediatrics as practised in this country. At least it's mainly British, with 42 of the 62 contributors coming from the United Kingdom, only 12 from North America, with four from Australia and four from mainland Europe. Although I have a high regard for American neonatology I found Dr Robertson's book far more relevant to our own beliefs and practices.

The first of the books' eight sections has five chapters on general aspects of neonatology, such as epidemiology, psychology, ethics, follow up, and death. The next section is on obstetrics for the neonatologist and section three deals briefly with embryology and fetal growth. General neonatal care in section four covers examination of the newborn, temperature control, all types of feeding, pharmacology, and resuscitation. There then follows the main body of the book in section five with 14 chapters on all aspects of disorders of the newborn described mainly by organ systems.

Some chapters such as the one on neurological disorders, are further subdivided into as many as eight parts. This section is comprehensive and well balanced, mainly relating to everyday clinical practice but also providing useful reference to the less common disorders. The remainder deals with organisation, procedures, and the usual appendices of normal values, etc. The book is produced to a high standard with clear layout, many subheadings, tables, and diagrams. There are plenty of black and white photos and some in colour. The x rays and ultrasound scans, which so often come out poorly in print, have reproduced well. Each chapter has a sizeable list of references. At £90 it may be beyond the pocket of many junior staff, but I can certainly recommend it to all

paediatricians working with the newborn, and I am sure every neonatal unit should have a copy.

BRIAN SPIEDEL

Respiratory Disorders in the Newborn. Current Reviews in Paediatrics. By V Y H Yu. Pp 156: £19.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1986.

This excellent book is the latest in the series 'Current reviews in paediatrics' under the overall editorship of Dr Tim Chambers and Professor A Green.

The single author format allows the very complex subject of respiratory disorders in the newborn to be covered in a small but detailed book with appropriate cross references and very little repetition. Each subject is covered in a short, concise, but very clear description, usually covering what is known of predisposing factors, pathophysiology, and prevention as well as acute and chronic management and long term outcome. Each section is extremely well referenced and in general the author manages to define clearly those statements that are based on objective studies or published data from those statements that reflect his own considerable clinical experience but may not yet have been subjected to detailed scientific scrutiny.

The descriptions of anatomic and physiologic development of the lung and the respiratory system in general are short enough to be read by the interested resident in neonatal medicine but detailed enough and sufficiently well referenced to provide an appropriate guide to further reading. There follow sections on perinatal asphyxia, aspiration syndrome, hyaline membrane disease, pneumonia, pulmonary oedema, pulmonary air leak, pulmonary hypertension, chronic lung disorders, apnoeic attacks, and congenital anomalies of the respiratory system. In each of these chapters the same format is followed with an extraordinary amount of information being crammed into very concise descriptions of the various conditions being covered. As for the sections on physiology and anatomy, all the clinical sections are extremely well referenced and the reader is left in no doubt about which aspects of care are standard and widely applied and which are perhaps slightly more idiosyncratic.

If there is any real criticism of this book it is that relatively little attention is given to experimental or unconventional approaches to management, which might be of value to the audience for whom this book is intended as it is often helpful to know which alternative approaches have been tried and what results, if any, are available.

In summary, this book should prove of great value to both medical and nursing staff involved in the care of newborn infants. It is concise enough to be read throughout by the more highly motivated residents but is detailed enough to provide a useful reference book and as such finds a place on the shelves of most special and intensive care baby units.

P J FLEMING

Care of the Child with Diabetes. Edited by J D Baum and A L Kinmouth. Pp 288: £24.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1986.

This sets out to be 'both a text book and a practical manual of diabetic care' and it succeeds better as a textbook. In its success, however, it shows a highly professional multidisciplinary approach; an exemplary model for paediatric diabetic care in the 1980s. Anyone having the care of diabetic children should consult a copy, and that includes parents. Can we hope that in the second edition the patient's voice will be heard verbatim and not only through his parents?

J H KEEN

Standards in Pediatric Orthopedics. Tables, Charts and Graphs Illustrating Growth. Edited by Robert N Hensinger. Pp 403: \$65.50 hardback. Raven Press, 1986.

This is a book of graphs, tables, and diagrams covering a wide range of aspects of growth from the fetus to the fully grown. It is designed primarily for those interested in paediatric orthopaedics, as the title implies, and has sections on spine and skull, hip and pelvis, upper extremity, hand, lower extremity, and foot. These include comprehensive data on bone sizes,