
Diseases specific to the paediatric period are intimately related to the processes of growth and development and thus tend to be expressed in the child when development progresses most rapidly in fetal and early neonatal life. Scientific and diagnostic advances have moved inexorably towards the point of inception of disease and it is to such structural and biochemical anomalies in the embryo and immature fetus. To many non-medical and some medical people the terms perinatal pathology and paediatric pathology have become synonymous.

It is thus an almost insurmountable problem in presenting an overview of a subject which is so heavily weighted towards the fetal end but contains important conditions that present only in infancy or childhood.

This task is one that is now attempted only by Professor Berry, whose book thus occupies a unique position. How has Professor Berry managed to keep the balance between fetal and perinatal pathology in producing a second edition? The new edition is as well produced and illustrated as the original and is clearly written throughout. It is illustrated by some 200 pages. The book has not changed in overall emphasis, perhaps because neither editor nor many of the contributors are practising paediatric pathologists.

In the first chapter, on examination of the fetus, there is a new section on the neonatal necropsy and a few additional tables to aid in determining fetal maturation. The chapter on the placenta has been included in favour of a new chapter by RO Kascula on infectious diseases. The rest of the book has been updated to varying levels by the original authors. Although some chapters, such as those on the respiratory system and sudden unexpected death, are replete with recent references, others contain relatively few references to work published within the last 10 years. Surprisingly, the new chapter on infectious diseases, while dealing at length with congenital syphilis, contains no mention of AIDS, although the topic is touched on briefly elsewhere in the text.

Many of the chapters in this text are good introductory reviews of the subject and some are extremely useful for reference purposes. The work as a whole remains in that indeterminate position as neither an everyday bench book for the practising paediatrician nor a comprehensive academic reference book on paediatric pathology. It is a work for the departmental or hospital library rather than individual purchase.

The work is laid out in a disease oriented format with specific chapters on anatomy, physiology, and pathology within the affected system. Each section includes a chapter on the paediatric aspects of each condition where appropriate. This design means that it is often necessary to look in several places to gain the desired information, but it is extremely comprehensive. There is little historical information and the references are very topical.

Although references are provided at the end of each section, paediatric endocrinologists will find the coverage of their interest rather skimpy and lacking in discussion of the more current controversies and research. For instance, there is very little concerning non-conventional indications for growth hormone treatment or the surgical approaches to short stature in skeletal dysplasias. The therapeutic options for juvenile thyrotoxicosis are mentioned but not assessed critically. For a clinician used to focusing on the impact of an endocrinopathy on the rate of growth the section on auxology is also disappointing. Many of the named drugs are given as mg per kg whereas American equivalents and SI unit conversion factors are only given in an appendix. The doses for children are often stated baldly, without allowance for body size or individual variation.

The book succeeds best as a reference for those seeking information outside their usual field of interest and those needing an up to date account of the physiological and metabolic basis for a disease process. There is also entertaining coverage of some extremely rare conditions (such as 'hamburger thyrotoxicosis') secondary to the ingestion of thyroid gland and also some fascinating and absorbing footnotes, such as some high quality black and white illustration.

At only $125, which puts the cost of many comparable recent British editions to shame, this reference text should find its way on to the shelves of our libraries as a source book for a wide range of clinicians and scientists. A paediatrician wishing to own a definitive textbook specifically relating to endocrinology in childhood might find the second edition of Brook's Clinical Paediatric Endocrinology a more appropriate choice.


Operative Paediatric Urology raises the technical manual to the level of an art form. David Frank and Herbert Johnston have produced a beautiful account of the open operations of the specialty. The text is concise, the layout stimulating and the illustrations, to the surgical eye at least, visually pleasing. The illustra- tors, Philip Wilson, should be credited for his contribution to the success that this book will undoubtedly enjoy. Paediatric urology is breaking new ground. The editors have endeavoured to reflect this in their choice of subjects and authors. The powerful influence of Liverpool upon the specialty is clearly evi- dent. Mr Johnston has contributed a number of chapters himself and the affected company has written an excellent chapter on urinary diversion. There are also excellent contributions from some of the many dis- tinguished Americans who spent time as visiting fellows.