

Manual of Rheumatology and Outpatient Orthopedic Disorders: Diagnosis and Therapy

3rd ed, edited by Stephen Paget, Paul Pellicci, John F. Beary III, 527 pp, \$28, ISBN 0-316-68846-0, Boston, Mass, Little Brown & Co Inc, 1993.

I have kept a row of spiral manuals published by Little Brown & Co Inc readily available for use in my office for years, finding them extremely useful in daily practice. The latest edition of the *Manual of Rheumatology* is a splendid addition to that row. Written by rheumatologists and orthopedic surgeons from Cornell University Medical College, the 57 chapters of the book provide family physicians with a cornucopia of information on connective tissue and other rheumatoid disorders and make that information easily accessible and digestible.

The book's organization follows that of *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine* in that it begins with a discussion of the basic database needed to approach the rheumatic diseases, presents the basic signs and symptom categories (muscle pain, rash, shoulder pain, Raynaud's phenomenon, etc), provides specific information on diagnosis and therapy of specific entities (grouped in general categories), and concludes with a very good section of the principles and practice of orthopedic surgery and rehabilitation. The chapter on physical therapy is especially useful in providing drawings of exercises, which can be reproduced for patient use. There are also several appendixes, including an excellent formulary of drugs used in treating rheumatic disorders.

In reviewing the book, I se-

lected several specific topics that frequently perplex me to see if the presentation was useful for quick review in daily practice. In each case, the answer was yes.

There are excellent tables on the differential diagnosis of monoarthritis and polyarthritis by presentation (acute, chronic, migratory, nonmigratory).

The question of how to approach the problem of possible temporal arteritis, with its potential for disaster if not treated on the one hand and the cost and risk of complications of biopsy and steroid treatment on the other, is nicely handled.

Treatment of rheumatoid arthritis is thoroughly discussed, with detailed information on preparations of salicylates, choice of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, and the combination use of nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs (eg, gold, penicillamine, and methotrexate). The authors emphasize using disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs aggressively, as soon as the diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis has been confirmed, to alter the progression of the disease and to prevent the development of erosions.

The many clinical presentations of systemic lupus erythematosus and its effect on the results of serologic tests, such as antinuclear antibodies, are succinctly covered for rapid perusal. Coverage of the treatment of systemic lupus erythematosus in its many forms is also thorough.

All the rare conditions seem to be included. I came up with a number of new volleys for roundmanship contests—one gem is Gamstorp's disease (adynamia episodica hereditaria) in your adoles-

cent patients who become weak during prolonged exertion or who like to take too much potassium chloride. The rare and exotic conditions do not get in the way, however; osteoarthritis, fibromyositis, etc, get the full attention that their prevalence deserves.

The authors present a fine small chapter on arthrocentesis and intra-articular injection. The HLA antigen system is summarized in useful form. The section on clinical presentations is a potent resource for diagnostic guidance. There is a chart on cutaneous nerve distribution and neurologic dermatomes—something I can never seem to find when I am in a hurry.

Like all these manuals, this one places its emphasis on practical, quick information for diagnosis and treatment. Questions on pathophysiology or study for thorough understanding will require recourse to the large, standard textbooks and journal reviews.

The index, while complete and useful, has one characteristic that seems common to most medical books and that never fails to irritate me: "Arthritis, infectious—see Infectious arthritis." Why can't the editors just put the page number instead of "see . . ."? I admit that such practice is much less evident in this book than in most.

This book presents an immense amount of readily accessible, up-to-date information in a package that strains neither your low back nor your billfold. What is more, you will not feel guilty about tossing it out when the next edition is published. It is a bargain.

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