

Book reviews

Shoulder arthroplasty

Louis U Bigliani and Evan L Flatow , 220 pages, Springer Verlag, Germany 2005
ISBN 0-387-22336-3

With such well-known and experienced authors, it is easy to expect that their book should be something extraordinary. It was therefore perhaps with a certain amount of disappointment that I studied this new publication. However, the book covers the topic of shoulder replacement in an excellent way if you are looking for basic information from an American point of view. The late Ian Kelly was the only European contributor. You should really see the book as a basic publication on how to perform a replacement of the shoulder joint, and if you follow the recommendations you will avoid many of the mistakes still being made today.

The basic surgical principles are well described, and this also applies to routine practical management of soft tissues. These are probably the most important and didactic parts of the book. After all, shoulder replacement is more of a soft tissue procedure than implantation of hardware, and an understanding of soft tissue handling is therefore essential. For example, detachment and refixation of the subscapularis muscle is well described in several chapters.

It is difficult to appreciate details in a black-and-white photograph taken during a surgical procedure. There are color photos, but the book would benefit from having color photos only instead of

having nearly 200 illustrations (which is positive), but only 30 of them in full color.

There are topics which I think should have been included in this otherwise very worthwhile publication. The reversed prostheses are hardly mentioned in the chapter on revision surgery, and they are not included at all when discussing rotator cuff arthropathy, which are (to my mind) two of the main indications for reversed prosthesis.

The chapter on rehabilitation is well written, with many drawings and tables. I am not sure that I agree with the statement that hemiarthroplasties following a proximal humeral fracture should be treated with early motion and active, albeit assisted, range of motion 2 to 3 weeks after surgery.

This book is very useful in showing the basic principles to consider when doing hemi- and total shoulder replacement on various types of patients. Many practical tips and tricks are given. If you have already read the book of Gilles Walch and co-workers but need something different—this is the book for you.

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Oxford textbook of orthopedics and trauma

Edited by Christopher Bulstrode, Joseph Buckwalter, Andrew Carr, Larry Marsh, Jeremy Fairbank, James Wilson-MacDonald and Gavin Bowden, 3 volumes, 2773 pages, Oxford University Press 2002

ISBN 0-19-856794-4

331 authors contributed to this huge textbook in a three-volume paperback edition. Almost 3,000 pages with two columns of text per page give the reader the opportunity to gain a great deal of knowledge. The editors have invited leading authorities, mainly from the USA and the UK, with the intention of collating the different chapters to a comprehensive and cosmopolitan textbook covering 5 major topics: fundamental orthopedic science, adult orthopedics, trauma, pediatric orthopedics and pediatric trauma. The book provides instruction in scientific and orthopedic thinking. It discusses different operative treatment methods but does not give detailed techniques or tricks. The “highlights” are depicted in boxes, giving the reader the opportunity of a quick overview. It has surely taken a lot of time to compile a comprehensive book like this, and it is understandable that many of the references are rather outdated. You won’t find the most recent opinions in a textbook like this, but many of the expert opinions described have stood the test of time. My opinion is that best practice should be based more on mature ideas than on the illusions of the day.

Volume 1 is called “Fundamentals”. The main part of this book, however, is about tumors, and apart from that the arrangement of the chapters is not very logical. It starts with high-tech therapy: the endoprosthetic replacement of skeletal malignancies. There are two separate chapters, “Biopsy for suspicion of tumor” and “Biopsy of musculoskeletal tumors”, undoubtedly a result of the large number of authors. After this remarkable sequence, a large number of—sometimes very rare—bone and soft tissue tumors are well described and illustrated. There is even a chapter about skin cancer, and I wonder why they have added this information to an orthopedic textbook. On the other hand, the chapters about fundamentals of infection, pain and biomechanics are relatively short and basic.

Volume 2 deals with adult orthopedics: spine, upper extremity, pelvis and lower extremity, and ending with general disorders. The classification of subjects within distinct chapters is not consistent, and sometimes not very logical. In the chapter about the knee, for example, I could not find anything about meniscus pathology. The comprehensive index, however, refers the reader to part 5 of volume 3 on pediatric trauma. The quality and length of the chapters differ a lot. Sometimes, as in the chapter about shoulder instability, there is a good overview of different operative possibilities; but sometimes the information is a summary review. A long closing chapter about general disorders includes tuberculosis and miscellaneous orthopedic infections such as leprosy, accentuating the cosmopolitan intentions of the editors.

Volume 3 deals mainly with trauma, including a separate part about childrens’ trauma. It is not only the specific bone or joint-related trauma that is discussed; the book also gives general information about injuries (including wartime surgery) and principles of treatment. A minor part of the book—still 200 pages, however—is about pediatric orthopedics. It starts with osteomyelitis and septic arthritis, but I missed the orthopedic physical examination of the child. Again, some chapters are well written by experienced authors. Some are relatively short. The fact that there are only two pages about club feet, for example, shows that this book cannot replace a pediatric orthopedic textbook.

I do not clearly recognize what target group the editors have in mind for this book. In some respects it gives too much information for the resident, but on the other hand it will not satisfy the specialist looking for more detailed information either. The arrangement of the chapters, although some are well written, makes it more of a reference book

than light reading. In the Netherlands the price is 578 Euro. Spending this amount of money, I would certainly prefer a hardcover book instead of this paperback edition which becomes easily damaged—especially as it is so big and heavy. In their introduction, the editors state that would like to think that this book should be on the shelf of every practicing orthopedic surgeon. I don't think their dream will be fulfilled. Buying a combination of

some excellent standard books on preferred fields of interest that are available on the market would probably be a more satisfying investment.

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