

Children's orthopaedics and fractures, second edition

Michael K.D. Benson, John A. Fixsen, Malcolm F. Macnicol, Klaus Parsch (eds), 720 pages, Churchill Livingstone, London 2002

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In this second edition of a textbook first published in 1994, the editorial team has been supplemented by Klaus Parsch. The number of authors has increased from 37 to 51, representing no less than 15 countries. A chapter on pediatric imaging has been added and likewise a chapter focusing on the limping child. The sections on trauma have been expanded substantially and several of the other chapters have been thoroughly revised, covering all fields of pediatric orthopedics.

The contents have been divided into 5 sections with 39 chapters. Most of the authors are well-known orthopedic surgeons with long experience and there are also valuable contributions by pediatricians, radiologists, and neurologists. The text is well-disposed and provides a clear and updated survey of all common and many rare disorders. Numerous schematic drawings and other illustrations explain and clarify important points in the text. Although less relevant to clinical practice in Scandinavia, it was interesting to read the chapters on skeletal tuberculosis, poliomyelitis, and children's orthopaedics in the tropics. As emphasized in the preface, the contents are not completely comprehensive and the book is mainly aimed at orthopedic surgeons in training. Therefore, one may have to refer to larger textbooks with more information about special aspects and very rare conditions at times. The recommendations about treatment represent sound principles, but must be supplemented by a surgical atlas, as surgical procedures are not described in detail.

When there are many authors, it is difficult to avoid some repetition. Therefore, the chapter on principles of fracture care contains material that could be omitted because the same information is

more thoroughly dealt with in the later chapters on specific types of fractures. The reference lists contain adequate, but few references. More references would be of value to the readers who seek more information about particular questions.

Although it is difficult to find any weaknesses in this book, a few comments should be made. Several of the radiographic, MRI, and ultrasound images are not easy to interpret by those unfamiliar with the subject. Arrows and other symbols indicating the most relevant findings should be used much more in the next edition. It is noteworthy that no MR images have been included in the chapters on bone tumors, especially since the authors point out that "MRI continues to evolve". Catterall's treatment for clubfoot seems well founded, but it is surprising that Ponseti's method, which is probably the most widely used method today, is not mentioned. Open reduction of femoral neck fractures is recommended, although gentle closed reduction, guided by fluoroscopy, will be tried first by most orthopedic surgeons.

In conclusion, this book is an excellent contribution to the pediatric orthopedic literature and should be available in all orthopedic departments, mainly for educational purposes. It can not replace the largest textbooks, but is a valuable supplement because it is concise and relatively short and reflects the vast experience of several of the world's leading experts.

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