

Book reviews

Operative hand surgery

David P Green (editor), 2384 pages, 2 volumes, Churchill Livingstone, New York, 1993

ISBN 0-443-08803-9

Since the first edition of this book was published in 1982, David P Green has become well known and his books are widely used and appreciated in the daily practice of surgery of the hand and upper extremity. This third updated edition is therefore very welcome as a complement to the previous ones.

The 78 contributors (74 from the United States), all well known and highly respected authors in their respective fields, present 62 chapters, grouped in 26 sections. Every chapter is richly illustrated by black-and-white photographs, radiographs and schematic drawings. Some parts, for example *Rheumatoid arthritis in the hand and wrist*, should have benefited from a smaller number of black-and-white photographs in favor of more schematic drawings. It is hard to fully understand several of the photographs from the operating room. However, in all chapters different surgical techniques are generally presented in a clear way. Many chapters conclude with *Author's preferred method*, and this is most valuable as it gives a summary of the author's many years of clinical experience in his special field. Each chapter also has a very comprehensive reference list, now updated until 1991. For instance, the chapter on *Congenital malformations* covering 300 very thoroughly illustrated pages, includes no fewer than 1046 references, and the chapter on *Nerve entrapment* has 600 references, out of which about 200 deal exclusively with the carpal tunnel syndrome. In contrast, endoscopic carpal tunnel release is presented in a rather brief but soundly critical way, necessary to balance the enormously growing enthusiasm that this new technique has created.

The 8 chapters on *Microvascular surgery* (243 pages), edited by the assistant editor Robert N Hotchkiss, cover most parts of the topic, such as basic principles of microvascular surgery, replantation, free skin and composite flaps, free muscle transfers and vascularized bone grafts. *Arthroscopy of the wrist and elbow* appears for the first time in this edition.

The very complex condition *Reflex sympathetic dystrophy* is dealt with in an excellent way. However, one misses a paragraph about the all-important prophylaxis as brought up for example by the Swedish authors Erik Moberg and Gösta Frykman.

Many chapters are, beyond doubt, addressed to hand surgeons. However, many chapters are of a more general character. The introductory chapter, *General principles*, ought to be studied by every orthopedic trauma surgeon, who would also find great interest in *Anesthesia, Amputations, Dystrophy, Fasciotomy, Fractures and Dislocations* (in all 7 chapters on ligament injuries, phalangeal, metacarpal and carpal bone fractures, fractures of the distal radius and the AO fixation technique), *Infections, Open injuries, Extensor tendons* and *Thermal injury*, to mention a few.

In conclusion, this magnificent work can be warmly recommended and should naturally find its place in the library of every orthopedic and hand surgery department.

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The diabetic foot

Marvin E Levin, Lawrence W O'Neal, John H Bowker (editors), 635 pages, Mosby Year Book, St Louis, 1993

ISBN 0-8016-6878-6

This fifth edition of *The Diabetic Foot* is a reflexion of the rapidly expanding interest and knowledge concerning the care of the foot in diabetic patients. The 57 contributors illustrate excellently the complex nature of the problem and the necessity of a multidisciplinary approach.

Several new chapters have been included and most of the remaining chapters have been re-written and up-dated. New chapters include epidemiology, dermatology, the Charcot-foot, pedorthic care, growth factors and topical treatment, hyperbaric oxygen treatment, etc. Especially impressing are the chapters on biomechanics and pathogenesis of abnormal loading of the foot.

It is inevitable that some overlapping and discrepancies occur in a multi-authored text. We find the limited information on the micro-circulation of the foot, and especially on the key questions of capillary dysfunction and its consequences for the development and prognosis of foot ulcers, disappointing, and we also lack information on new, non-invasive vascular testing techniques, such as capillary microscopy.

The chapter on amputations is well illustrated and the subject is well covered, but where the previous edition attempted to give a comprehensive outline of the spectrum of surgical events (debridement–local resection–minor amputation–major amputation), including very thoughtful comments on difficulties and requirements with regard to studies in this field, these aspects have now been replaced by a more straightforward, technical approach. This tendency also appears in several other chapters.

The book, however, offers fundamental information for understanding the etiology and pathogenesis of diabetic foot lesions, and a practical clinical approach to assessment, investigation and therapy for everyone involved in the care of the diabetic foot. It is the most comprehensive text in the field and can be recommended. It is a necessity for all, physicians and surgeons alike, who meet or treat the diabetic patient.

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A short practice of spinal surgery

Henry V Crock (editor), 338 pages, Springer Verlag, Vienna, Austria, 1993

ISBN 3-211-82351-4

10 years have passed since the first edition of this comprehensive textbook was released. The author was then an Australian spine surgeon, but since 1986 he is working in London as director of the Spinal Disorders Unit at the Cromwell Hospital.

The book is mainly focused on disc disease, spinal stenosis and spondylolisthesis in the lumbar spine, but a chapter dedicated to the cervical spine and another to spinal infections are also included. The book is mainly concerned with descriptive pathomorphology, diagnostics and surgical treatment of defined spinal nerve compression syndromes. It is the ambition of the author to pinpoint the localization of nerve compression as exactly as possible in order to minimize the surgical procedure. The prerequisite for such an approach is a thorough knowledge of normal as well as pathological anatomy in the degenerative lumbar spine, which is extensively explained. The text on vascularization of the cauda equina and the lumbar nerve roots, to which the author has devoted a significant amount of his research time, is excellent as also is the final chapter giving a thorough review of different causes of failure in

spinal operations and the treatment options involved.

The author's long experience of spinal surgery is embodied in a tremendously useful practical guide for everybody dealing with lumbar spine surgery, and especially for surgeons in training. Some of the newer and more controversial treatment modalities, such as percutaneous procedures and extensive instrumented fusion procedures, have not been included, because their places are not ultimately defined today.

The book gives extremely comprehensive guidelines for spinal surgery, is well illustrated, and is in its present form unique on the market. It does not suffice as the only book for the spinal surgeon, but should without question be read by everyone dealing with the subject. I read it from the first to the last page without interruption because of its clear structure and the author's beautiful presentation.

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