
This text fulfills its description as a source book on pain for health professionals. Most of the information contained is current and pertinent.

The material is divided into four parts. Part I discusses pain theories, physiologic and psychological mechanisms, and pain measurement. Part II describes the various modalities of therapy available for the relief of chronic pain, including pharmacologic, surgical, stimulative and psychological approaches. Part III discusses the more common pain syndromes, grouped according to etiology. Included in this portion of the text is an excellent chapter on the pain experience in children. Part IV is an annotated cross-reference bibliography of classic and pertinent literature on pain. This bibliography, combined with the references at the end of each chapter, provides a comprehensive index of the major contributions to the literature.

A third of the chapters are reproduced from other publications. This, together with the fact that the text is comprised of individual contributions of many authors, results in considerable repetition. Theories and mechanisms are duplicated in Chapters 1 and 2, psychological contributions to the pain state in 3 and 4, classification of pain in 6 and 15, and stimulation techniques in 7 and 15. The continuity could have been improved by skillful editing.

The chapter on narcotic and non-narcotic analgesics is a compendium of the pharmacologic effects of most of the drugs in current use. The author, however, fails to discuss the problems of habituation and addiction in chronic pain patients or to describe a rational approach to the pharmacologic management of chronic pain.

In Part III, the discussions of management of specific pain entities are well oriented to the nursing professional. Illustrations are few, but contribute significantly to the text.

In general, this book is recommended reading, not only for the allied health professional, but also for the physician who is seeking a single text to provide an overview of both chronic pain mechanisms and management. Here he can also find therapeutic approaches to some specific pain states.

Harold Caron, M.D.
Department of Anesthesia
University of Virginia Medical School
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903


This book covers, in eight chapters, each by a different author, the principal aspiration syndromes. It is presented within the current series, International Anesthesiology Clinics, volume 15, number 1. Each chapter is independently referenced, and a comprehensive index is provided. Every contributor is a noted authority in the area of expertise covered by his chapter. The book is primarily aimed at the clinician, and as such, provides a useful manual for the practicing anesthesiologist, anesthesiology resident, nurse anesthetist, and others involved with a clinical care of patients at risk from aspiration. However, for those expecting a detailed academic discussion of the underlying pathophysiologic dynamics there is little to excite.

Obviously, in a book comprised of separate independent contributions within related areas, some overlap and redundancy must be expected. Fortunately, for the most part the redundancies serve to emphasize vitally important points: the effectiveness of controlled pulmonary ventilation and the appropriate use of posi-