

BOOK REVIEWS

these vulnerable patients, but set in the context of the British legal system and therefore of less interest to readers in the United States.

The majority of the book is comprised of the chapters on various types of surgery, from 6 to 62 pages in length. Most of the approaches to therapy would be considered standard and reflect the prevailing opinion of most American clinicians. Some topics, discussed at length, bear no unique connection to the elderly other than through occasional gratuitous statements such as, "The main aim in the postoperative management of the elderly patient is to try to produce both stable cardiovascular and respiratory systems." There are a few outright errors; for example, the minimum alveolar concentration of isoflurane at age 80 is given as 1.95.

Naturally, many readers may find only certain sections of the book useful. For example, readers who are knowledgeable about the issues associated with anesthesia may find several of the chapters superficial. Readers who are only beginning to appreciate the unique problems of the aging patient may not be interested in the technical details of some standard surgical procedures. Moreover, there is much more to the care of the older patient than included here. If asked to select a book that ranges beyond this one but is not so unwieldy as to

discourage active use, I would choose *Geriatric Anesthesia: Principles and Practice*, by C. R. Stephen and Richard Assaf (Butterworths, 1986).

Defects as noted are not enough to seriously mar the book's fine finish. There is an immense amount of practical information in this small volume. I found it quite informative at an entry level and perhaps best suited for the general practitioner or internist who might be referring older patients for surgery and curious to know more. *The Ageing Surgical Patient* also provides a portal through which to view the resource investment decisions of a cost-conscious British health-care system for a patient group having, by all standards, diminishing returns.

In this general context, a drawback is the cost of the volume itself.

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ERRATUM

The book review of *Pharmacokinetics for Anaesthesia* (ANESTHESIOLOGY 78:624-625, 1993) contained an error. The title of the textbook referred to in the review is *Anesthetic Uptake and Action* (edited by Edmond I. Eger II, M.D.).