

REVIEWS OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

James C. Eisenach, M.D., Editor

Review of Clinical Anesthesia, Second Edition. By D. G. Silverman and N. R. Connelly. Philadelphia, Lippincott-Raven, 1997. Pages: 288. Cost: \$39.95.

This book parallels the new third edition of *Clinical Anesthesia* (Edited by Paul G. Barash, Bruce F. Cullen, and Robert K. Stoelting). As the editors of *Review of Clinical Anesthesia* state in their introduction, "the multiple-choice questions in this text can be used as a means of self-assessment prior to taking a written exam." To stay short: This task is perfectly achieved. The multi-authored book is a compendium of six sections leading from an introduction of basic principles of anesthesia practice and pharmacology to preparing for anesthesia, management of anesthesia, and to post-anesthesia and consultant practice. Each section is divided by chapters (57 in total) ranging in length from three to six pages. Chapters start with questions following the same style as in actual examinations. Thereafter, answers to each question are provided as are complete explanations to the correct answers. Moreover, a page and heading reference is added that refers the reader to the appropriate section in *Clinical Anesthesia*. With this and other anesthesiology-related publications, *Review of Clinical Anesthesia* also is available on CD-ROM.

The questions in every chapter seem to be selected carefully to match the chapter headline as close as possible and are mostly relevant, as are the explanations. Thus, redundancy has been successfully avoided, and the choice of a topic for self-assessment is made easy among the wealth of chapters. However, it appears that a compromise had to be made between relevance for clinics and relevance for board preparation. As such, from a clinician's point of view, some chapters (airway management, obstetrical anesthesia, pediatric anesthesia, regional anesthesia) would deserve more attention, which means more questions. This would further promote the second task suggested by the editors, "to focus reading of the novice and the expert and help to assess self-mastery of most relevant material."

In summary, for those readers preparing for an examination and using *Clinical Anesthesia* as one of their main sources of an anesthesia textbook, *Review of Clinical Anesthesia* is an ideal companion to check their knowledge and to find a quick reference for any necessary brush-up materials.

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Ocular Anesthesia. Edited by S. Greenbaum. Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders Company, 1997. Pages: 237. Price: \$70.00.

Anesthesiologists may find it difficult to believe that a 237-page textbook can be written on the subject of ophthalmic anesthesia. This relative verbosity is paradoxically the strength and weakness of *Ocular Anesthesia*, a new textbook edited by Scott Greenbaum. Each subspec-

ialty becomes the subject of a comprehensive commentary on the ideal ophthalmic anesthetic. For instance, the chapter on "Anesthesia for Cataract Surgery" contains all of the information one would ever desire on the history, anatomy, procedures, and complications of anesthesia for this common operation. Unfortunately, the editing of this book allows for similar detail to be found in the chapters on vitreoretinal surgery, refractive surgery, and so on.

The reader who is willing to wade through pages of redundant information is rewarded with wonderful snippets of information. The history of ocular anesthesia, clear descriptions of eye and adnexa anatomy accompanied by remarkable illustrations, detailed technical narrations of the major ocular and facial nerve blocks, and comprehensive discussions of anesthetic complications are otherwise obscured by yet another version of retrobulbar block. Some specific commentary is excellent, such as the pertinent relationship of intraocular pressure and general anesthesia. The sole contributing anesthesiologist offers practical wisdom on special patient situations, such as preoperative hypertension, anticoagulation, coughing, or claustrophobia.

The publisher identifies ophthalmologists as this book's primary audience, with anesthesiologists constituting a secondary market. One suspects most ophthalmologists will gain little from specific descriptions of anesthetic induction agents, although the section on sedating patients for oculoplastic procedures is reasonably well done. Although explicit discussions about malignant hyperthermia and masseter muscle spasm may on first glance seem irrelevant, they do serve to educate ophthalmologists about anesthetic complications. Anesthesiologists will no doubt find much of this new book curiously outdated. For example, it warns against the potential for ventricular dysrhythmia when epinephrine is used in conjunction with cyclopropane, advises preoperative chest radiographs in patients aged more than 60 yr, and suggests liver enzymes may be indicated if the patient is to undergo general anesthesia.

Because this book is relatively inexpensive (\$70.00), *Ocular Anesthesia* may be a suitable reference text in centers where anesthesiologists actually perform eye blocks as part of their practice. However, most practicing anesthesiologists and residents can procure the essentials of ocular anesthesia from standard textbooks such as Miller's *Anesthesia* or Brown's *Atlas of Regional Anesthesia*.

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Poikilothermia in Man: Pathophysiological Aspects and Clinical Implications. By M. A. MacKenzie. Uitgeverij KU Nijmegen, Nijmegen University Press, 1996. Pages: 192. Price: \$39.00.

Poikilothermia in Man is a doctoral thesis on poikilothermia syndrome and summarizes Dr. MacKenzie's decade-long interest in the topic.

The first section was written in conjunction with Professor