

REVIEWS OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL

James C. Eisenach, M.D., Editor

Obstetric Anesthesia and Uncommon Disorders. Edited by David R. Gambling and M. Joanne Douglas. Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders Company, 1997. Pages: 479. Price: \$89.00.

Everyone who is involved in the practice of obstetric anesthesia will face challenges of the gravid patient presenting with an uncommon medical disorder. With advances in antenatal care and reproduction endocrinology, patients with coexisting diseases will present in labor and delivery. Occasionally, they present without warning and require some form of emergency treatment for delivery. Drs. Gambling and Douglas have put together an excellent review for such occasions in this first comprehensive textbook of anesthesia for obstetric patients with uncommon diseases.

The diversity of the topics discussed in this textbook is of particular interest to anesthesiologists. However, obstetricians and maternal fetal medicine specialists will also benefit from this textbook because it clearly explains the anesthesia implications for their difficult patients. The chapters are thoughtful and very well laid out, with a common-sense approach to the anesthesia management of these rare disorders. The strengths of the textbook are in its ease of reading and the substance of its chapters, enabling the reader to make an informed choice.

The first part of the textbook concentrates on cardiac, respiratory, and neurologic diseases, and the remaining chapters deal with the more rare metabolic, endocrine, and hematologic disorders. The text also includes a very useful chapter concerning unusual maternal and fetal conditions, which summarizes some of the treatment dilemmas in patients undergoing rare procedures, such as cordocentesis. We particularly enjoyed the chapters concerning cardiac abnormalities in the gravid patient, because there are excellent illustrations of the various repairs for congenital heart diseases with the physiologic changes explained. This is particularly helpful because the number of patients with congenital cardiac disease is increasing in our patient population.

Overall, this multiauthored textbook is very well written and comprehensive. The figures and tables have been appropriately selected and effectively illustrate some of the important points in the text. This textbook adequately discusses most of the uncommon diseases that one would see in a moderate-sized obstetric anesthesia practice. For tertiary referral centers this book is an invaluable resource. The hard-bound version of this book lends it to be particularly useful as a reference book to be placed on site in delivery units and departmental libraries. This is an excellent-value-for-money textbook for all anesthesiologists interested in obstetric anesthesia, and a must for all those practicing high-risk obstetrics with a teaching commitment. Similar to *Anesthesia and Co-existing Diseases*, edited by Drs. R. K. Stoelting and S. F. Dierdorff, this text will need to be updated as the frontiers of medicine move on.

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The Heart and Lung in Obesity. Edited by Martin A. Alpert, M.D., and James K. Alexander, M.D. Armonk, New York, Futura Publishing Company, Inc., 1998. Pages: 242. Price: \$81.00.

This 253-page textbook is not casual reading. Edited by Martin A. Alpert, M.D., and James K. Alexander, M.D., this multiauthored textbook will tell you everything you want to know about the heart and lung in obesity. Although containing great detail, it is, however, very readable. The chapters are uniformly well written and appropriately highlighted with meaningful illustrations and tables. The chapter "Obesity and Sleep-Disordered Breathing" was particularly good in this regard, with various tables that provide valuable aids for diagnosing and treating these disorders. The chapter topics were thoughtfully selected and, despite their depth, are readably brief, allowing the reader to selectively choose areas of interest or concern and have a quick source to rapidly locate needed information. For example, if one were interested in assessing the cardiovascular status of an obese patient, the chapter "Obesity and Ventricular Function in Man" is available. The chapter presentations are logical and "Obesity Hypertension and the Heart" was particularly well written and clear. Equally important, each chapter, except one, contains a one- or two-paragraph concluding summary. The summaries are eminently readable and contain concise, relevant, and useful information. Therefore, I see the textbook's best value for those desiring an in-depth knowledge regarding obesity or alternatively as a resource for people seeking accurate, concise data that addresses specific problems in clinical care of these difficult patients.

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Interactive Anesthesia Library on CD-ROM (Version 2.0). Editorial Consultant, PG Barash. Philadelphia, Lippincott-Raven, 1997. Price: \$395.

With the explosion in medical information coinciding with the development of technology capable of storing massive quantities of data, medical publishers are releasing popular texts on CD-ROM. The *Interactive Anesthesia Library* combines seven textbooks (more than 7,900 pages of text and 2,900 images), an anesthesia simulator program, and short videos of anesthetic and monitoring procedures on a single CD-ROM and integrates the information using a search engine for key words and hypertext links. Included in this product are *Clinical Anesthesia* (3rd edition) edited by Barash PG, Cullen BF, and Stoelting RK; *Handbook of Clinical Anesthesia* (3rd edition), edited by Barash PG, Cullen BF, and Stoelting RK; *Review of Clinical Anesthesia* (2nd edition), edited by Silverman DG, and Connelly NR; *Neural Blockade in Clinical Anesthesia and Management of Pain* (2nd edition), edited by Cousins MJ, and Bridenbaugh PO; *Pharmacology and Physiology in Anesthesia Practice* (2nd edition), authored by Stoelting RK; *Anesthesiology: Problem-Oriented Patient Management* (3rd edition), edited by Yao FS and Artusio JF;