

apeutic concepts will clearly help the anesthesiologist to provide better care for the patient. At the end of the second section an introduction into neonatal physiology, assessment, pharmacology, and resuscitation is given, as many anesthesiologists may be confronted with a newborn who is delivered and requires immediate resuscitation.

Section 3 discusses different aspects of the puerperium and the immediate time thereafter. Common and important issues such as the use of maternally administered drugs and their impact on breastfeeding are discussed. Further, the authors note factors that may influence maternal satisfaction.

The last section covers organizational issues, administrative and medicolegal problems, and minimum standards, guidelines, and protocols. It also includes up-to-date commentary on the most recent (2006) American Society of Anesthesiologists Practice Guidelines for Obstetric Anesthesia, although the reference cited (p. 362) is to the older 1999 version. Excellent practical advice is given in the medico-legal section, including a plea for legible handwriting and contemporaneous, complete written notes. A mention is even made of the frequent illegibility of physician's signatures, with a suggestion to print one's name in capital letters after each signature. This is truly excellent advice, which should be heeded by more physicians!

This book gives both practicing anesthesiologists and anesthesiologists in training an overview of recurring topics in obstetric anesthesia. Trainees will be provided with new knowledge, while specialists might use this book as a quick reference while on call on obstetric wards. While most management strategies are universally applicable, others are limited to the United Kingdom, although differences to the United States are usually, but not consistently, mentioned. For example, chloroprocaine is not available in the United Kingdom and most parts of continental Europe. Thus, it is not listed as an option for "topping up" an epidural catheter either during labor or for emergency cesarean delivery. The widespread use of chloroprocaine in the United States may make this omission seem rather curious to American practitioners. Similarly, although many anesthesiologists in the United Kingdom and Europe use alfentanil for transvaginal oocyte retrieval, its use for this procedure has not gained popularity in the United States.

Other controversial topics (e.g., cricoid pressure) are discussed using the perspective of current United Kingdom practices. A section on vaginal birth after cesarean is titled "Trial of Scar," a uniquely British term which many American anesthesiologists will not recognize. The text does, however, mention the more common acronym of "VBAC." While the American obstetric anesthesiologist may appreciate a comparative approach to practice, such as learning about inhalation analgesia (Entonox) for labor, midwifery training, and midwife-controlled epidural top-ups, the book is primarily aimed at a United Kingdom or European audience. With the aforementioned limitation in mind, this book makes a nice addition to the library of anesthesiologists who want a concise and yet comprehensive book covering a wide range of topics in obstetric anesthesia.

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**Lecture Notes: Clinical Anaesthesia, 3rd Edition.** Edited by Carl L. Gwinnutt, M.B., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., F.R.C.A. Oxford, England, Wiley-Blackwell, 2008. Pages: 172. Price: \$36.95.

Medical students are challenged by the limited number of textbooks that provide quick and practical introductions to anesthesiology. *Lecture Notes: Clinical Anesthesia* introduces medical students, nurses and nurse anesthetists, and nonanesthesiologist general practitioners to the current practices of clinical anesthesiology. The textbook is also a useful tool to instructor anesthesiologists searching for a core text to recommend to their rotating medical students.

In addition to concepts in general anesthesia administration and management, *Lecture Notes: Clinical Anesthesia* provides a fair content of pain management principles and peripheral nerve blocks. In its six chapters, the book places emphasis on the role of anesthesiologists as perioperative physicians, not just operating room anesthesia providers. Three chapters of the book concentrate on perioperative medicine: chapter one, Anesthesia Assessment and Preparation for Surgery; chapter five, Recognition and Management of the Acutely Ill Patient on the Ward; and chapter six, Management of the Critically Ill Patient.

Although *Lecture Notes: Clinical Anesthesia* has been condensed in its third edition to 172 pages, it did not lose its standards of clear diagrams, photographs, and key facts boxes. These traits have to be some of the strongest features in earlier editions of this book. The photographs and diagrams assist learners, particularly visual learners, to comprehend key principles in anesthesiology such as applying mask ventilation, performing correct chest compression during cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and inserting laryngeal mask airways. In addition, the book contains self-assessment questions at the end of each chapter that focus the students' attention on the important concepts, with answers provided at the end of the book. In the reference section of each chapter, useful Web sites related to the chapter are provided as an excellent feature for modern learners who are very comfortable using technology and the internet for learning purposes.

Although *Lecture Notes: Clinical Anesthesia* contains a fair amount of pharmacology, it falls short of providing any significant content in physiology. In addition, other than a quick review on obstetric anesthesiology, the book does not provide any content regarding other subspecialties in anesthesiology such as pediatric or cardiothoracic anesthesiology.

In summary, *Lecture Notes: Clinical Anesthesia* offers a comprehensive review of general anesthesiology principles and practices in a quick and easy-to-read style. I recommend it as an excellent first-step for students and other medical professionals who are interested in the field of anesthesiology. The book provides principles of clinical anesthesiology in text, tables, and photographs, but students are encouraged to expand beyond this book for more in-depth knowledge of the medical specialty of anesthesiology.

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