

*Michael J. Avram, Ph.D., Editor*

**Anesthesia Student Survival Guide: A Case-based Approach.** By Jesse M. Ehrenfeld, M.D., M.P.H., Richard D. Urman, M.D., M.B.A., Scott Segal, M.D., M.H.C.M. New York, Springer, 2010. Pages: 575. Price: \$29.95.

Drs. Ehrenfeld, Urman, and Segal have done an excellent job at compressing the complexities of anesthesia into an easy-to-read text aimed at medical students in *Anesthesia Student Survival Guide: A Case-based Approach*. This pocket-sized paperback text provides a brief overview of the highlights of anesthesia. The book covers a broad range of basic topics, from preoperative patient evaluation to anesthesia care in more specialized areas, such as orthopedic, urologic, pediatric, and geriatric surgery. The case-based design of this text provides a broader view of anesthesia than is provided by more traditional texts. The 32 case studies are presented both at the beginning of the textbook and at the end of each chapter. It may be helpful in future editions to place the case stems at the beginning of each chapter as a complement to the learning objectives, with corresponding answers at the end of each chapter.

We were pleasantly surprised by the inclusion of appealing color diagrams and photographs, in addition to the typical black and white figures. These colored figures are atypical in a paperback text. Many of these colored figures provided great detail. Unfortunately, others were of relatively poor quality. The quality of the grayscale diagrams also varied from chapter to chapter. Greater consistency in the format of figures, diagrams, and photos would enhance the book.

A number of useful tables are scattered throughout the text and provide the reader with a quick reference to specific topics of interest. An appendix covers two topics: the American Society of Anesthesiologists Difficult Airway Algorithm and Malignant Hyperthermia. Clearly, these are important topics. However, additional depth would have been added to the appendix had it covered some of the other important issues that face anesthesiologists, such as some of those listed on the *Publication and Services* section of American Society of Anesthesiologists Web site.

Although the authors did not intend this to be a comprehensive review of anesthesia, chapters covering basic physiology and the autonomic nervous system would have been helpful. These topics are mentioned within the context of specific specialty topics. However, given their relative importance and the student audience, expansion of these two topics would be reasonable. In addition, a glossary of common terms and a list with a description of the most commonly used medications would have been helpful.

This is one of the only anesthesia texts that mentions issues associated with the National Residency Matching Program, Electronic Residency Application Service, and

the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. It also contains a nice section on professionalism and ethics. Given the target audience, it would also have been good to have included issues associated with the residency selection process.

Although we made a number of suggestions that might be considered in the next edition, we believe that this text is a definite winner as it stands. A key advantage of this text is the suggested retail price of \$29.95. This text is a good investment for the medical student who is being introduced to the specialty of anesthesia.

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**Anesthesia Secrets, 4th Edition.** By James Duke, M.D., M.B.A. Philadelphia, Mosby Elsevier, 2010. Pages: 574. Price: \$49.95.

As our specialty of anesthesiology has grown, the spectrum of topics and concepts vital to its knowledge and practice has expanded dramatically. Mastery of this explosion of information available can be overwhelming not only for the novice anesthesia provider but also for the more experienced provider seeking a quick review of a targeted topic. The fourth edition of *Anesthesia Secrets* by James Duke is a portable handbook of the Secrets Series® that could be useful to all levels of interest and practice in anesthesiology, including medical students, residents, attending anesthesiologists, and certified registered nurse anesthetists. It is a concise presentation of a multitude of topics, relevant and mandatory for anesthesia practice, that makes a worthwhile reference and review, that can be quickly accessible and on hand in the operating room, the preanesthesia clinic, the pain management clinic, and the intensive care unit.

James Duke has included numerous contributors, from anesthesia residents and clinical instructors to assistant professors, associate professors, and Professors of Anesthesiology, as authors of chapters for *Anesthesia Secrets, Fourth Edition*. This broad base of contributors, mostly from the University of Colorado, has produced an extremely well written, thorough, up-to-date, yet concise soft cover handbook.

The Top 100 Secrets are found at the beginning of the book and summarize vital concepts, principles, and details regarding the practice of anesthesiology. This makes an excellent, efficient framework upon which to organize anesthesiology board review and study as it allows a quick glance at the most frequently encountered board exam questions. After the Top 100 Secrets, the handbook is organized into 10

major sections that review the practice of anesthesiology, including basics of patient management and physiology, pharmacology, preparing to practice anesthesia, patient monitoring and procedures, perioperative problems, anesthesia and systemic disease, special anesthetic considerations, regional anesthesia, and anesthetic considerations for specific surgical procedures and pain management.

Each chapter is organized and the information is presented primarily in a question-and-answer format, which is helpful for board review and practice. The answers to the questions provide adequate depth of information yet are to the point, with bulleted text to separate longer, multifaceted answers and provide the information necessary for learning and supplementation of knowledge. Tables are included in some chapters, which further assist in the organization and concise presentation of details. Key Points boxes are shaded areas interposed among the questions and answers, serving to remind the reader briefly of the salient points and highlights. In addition, at the end of each chapter, suggested references, readings lists, and Web site addresses are provided that encourage the reader to seek more in-depth information from experts in the subject matter.

Anesthesia residents and academic attending anesthesiologists have found this handbook to be a guide and springboard from which to design and develop intraoperative teaching and educational discussions as well as board review series. Medical students have found that *Anesthesia Secrets, Fourth Edition* provides them with a framework upon which to build an understanding of many of the basics of anesthesia during a short rotation in addition from reading large textbooks. Others with more in-depth experience in the specialty of anesthesiology have found *Anesthesia Secrets, Fourth Edition* to provide a helpful review for the Maintenance of Certification in Anesthesia exam as the handbook is portable and filled with pertinent information.

Regardless of the reader's motivation, *Anesthesia Secrets, Fourth Edition*, continues to meet the editor's goal of providing a concise presentation of a wide range of topics important to anesthesia practitioners of all levels.

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