



Book reviews

Anaesthesia in Cosmetic Surgery

B. L. Friedberg (ed.)

Cambridge University Press, ISBN 978-0-521-87090-0, 263 pp., Price £55

This publication from the Cambridge University Press focuses on an area of medical practice that is almost entirely consumer-driven. The phenomenon of 'Office-based Anesthesia' (i.e. not in the hospital setting) is widespread in the USA, and it is from this standpoint that this book is compiled. The editor, and all but one of the chapter authors, are based in the USA, and thus bring a different experience of the issue when compared to readers on this side of the Atlantic.

The book comprises 18 chapters, divided into three parts; Minimally Invasive Anesthesia (MIA)[®], alternative anaesthesia approaches, and other considerations. The first chapter is entitled 'Propofol Ketamine with Bispectral Index (BIS) Monitoring', which is written by the editor. In it, he describes his technique for the administration of anaesthesia for *all* cosmetic surgery patients, which is explored further in the next few chapters.

The remainder of the first, and the second, part contain chapters on local and regional anaesthetic techniques, as well as more conventional forms of general anaesthesia for cosmetic surgery. The photographs and illustrations, although not in colour, complement the text well and the description of local anaesthetic blocks in head and neck surgery is excellent.

The third part deals with more diverse topics. There is a very extensively referenced chapter on psychological aspects of cosmetic surgery, and a series of chapters on the economic, political and medicolegal aspects of office-based practice. Although these are written from an American perspective, it is interesting to see these topics addressed in a medical text. In the changing world

of healthcare provision, an appreciation of these issues will be vital.

Anesthesia in Cosmetic Surgery is written in a relatively personal style. This brings the advantage of readability, and allows the chapter authors to demonstrate the principles behind their own practice clearly and persuasively. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the chapters contributed by the editor. This personalised style allows Dr Friedberg to offer a detailed 'recipe' for his own trademarked technique, with information boxes offering checklists, tips for success, and pitfalls to avoid.

This style of writing has drawbacks, however. The personalised, almost didactic, style has a tendency to read as a treatise to justify the author's point of view, rather than a balanced summary of the evidence. A passage in the preface reads, 'The reader who demands level 1 study to accept new solutions to clinical problems is reminded that neither aspirin nor penicillin ever had a level 1 study to validate their efficacy.' Perhaps not, but if introduced today, a study of this kind would be necessary. This reviewer does not doubt the efficacy of the MIA[®] technique, but I found that the style of the argument detracted from the usefulness of the message.

Does this book deserve a place on your bookshelf or in your departmental library? If you practice in this area, or have an interest in anaesthesia outwith the traditional hospital setting, then this book will provide much food for thought. You may even adopt the editor's own anaesthesia technique. If, however, you are looking for a balanced overview of the subject, then you may wish to look elsewhere.

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Epidurals for Childbirth (2nd edition)

A. May & R. Leighton

Cambridge University Press, ISBN 9780521704618, 202 pp., Price £24.99 (US\$48.00)

Anne May and her colleague Ralph Leighton are both consultant obstetric anaesthetists at The University Hospitals of Leicester with many years of experience between them. Dr May, in addition, has been President of the Obstetric Anaesthetists' Association (OAA) and also a Member of Council at the Royal College of Anaesthetists. A foreword is provided by Steve Yentis, which illustrates the great affection and respect held for Dr May in obstetric anaesthetic circles.

Now in its second edition, having first been published in 1994, this very popular book has been thoroughly revised and updated. The aim from its inception has always been to target a wide audience of the healthcare professionals involved in the provision of obstetric epidural analgesia and anaesthesia. Despite the broad appeal of this book much of the information here is highly relevant for anaesthetists of all grades and is of the type commonly asked in both parts of the Fellowship examination.

The text of the book is logically laid out and easily accessible, with illustrations where required. The broad structure of the 13 chapters can be divided into six general sections:

- Information relevant to mothers and the consent process for epidurals.
- Theoretical knowledge including relevant anatomy and physiology.
- Practical guidance in the insertion and management of epidurals.
- The complications associated with epidurals and appropriate treatment options.
- Regional blockade for lower segment Caesarean section.
- Running an obstetric anaesthetic service – systems, risk and record keeping.