BOOK REVIEWS

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Pressure Ulcer Research: Current and Future Perspectives

DAN BADER, CARLIJN BOUTEN, DENIS COLIN, CEES OOMENS (EDS)

EXTENT P/H	382 p, hardback
PRICE/ISBN	£100.00 3540250301
PUBLISHER	Springer (Berlin), 2005
REVIEWER	Chris Khoo
STAR RATING	****

This multi-author volume brings together 30 contributors under an international editorship. The four editors include three biomedical engineers (one from Queen Mary's College, University of London and two from the Eindhoven University of Technology) and the medical director of l'Arche Rehabilitation Centre in France, who is the only clinical author.

The final chapter on tissue repair strategies, which is of most surgical interest, focuses on 'biochemical stimulation of the wound bed to improve wound healing. Important new therapeutics in this category are reviewed such as: (i) exogenous application of growth factors; (ii) tissue-engineered skin grafts; and (iii) gene therapy.' The two authors from the Eindhoven University of Technology are (according to an internet search) not medically qualified, so understandably their viewpoints do not set out the full range of current reconstructive surgical options or 'future perspectives' in clinical surgery.

The publishers have adopted the convention of excluding any reference to the contributors' professional qualifications. With this handicap, the clinical reader cannot effectively assess treatment strategies mentioned by the authors as merely being references from the literature or from the author's own authoritative experience.

Nevertheless, this is a useful and unique contribution to a neglected area. Risk assessment, basic science and human and animal research are fully reviewed. Epidemiological studies from The Netherlands on the costs of pressure ulcer care and the medicolegal review from the US add significant practical insights. The chapter on the role of oxidative stress in the development and persistence of pressure ulcers is a particularly helpful summary of ischaemia-reperfusion injury from two Oxford biochemists who support their chapter with a comprehensive reference list. The editors have generally avoided repetition (a significant achievement in a multi-author text) though there is a colour illustration of a section through human skin that is a reiteration of a black and white graphic.

This slim volume succeeds in its aim of providing 'a clearer understanding of the mechanisms associated with the aetiology of pressure ulcers and to identify the risk levels of individuals'. Surgeons with a pressure sore and

wound-healing interest will find a useful reference even if it does not find wider surgical acceptance. I would certainly want to have this on my medical bookshelf.

Tissue Surgery

MARIA SIEMIONOW

EXTENT P/H	160 p, hardback
PRICE/ISBN	£60.00 1852339705
PUBLISHER	Springer (Berlin), 2006
REVIEWER	John Lowry
STAR RATING	***

The editor of this compact text in the *New Techniques in Surgery* series (under the overall editorship of John Lumley and Nadey Hakim) is director of plastic surgical research at the Cleveland Clinic. She has brought together 19 contributors from France, Belgium and Germany as well as from four units in the US.

In a short preparation period of less than a year, the challenge was to encompass descriptions of different surgical procedures on a variety of tissue types, by experts in the fields of plastic, orthopaedic, hand, aesthetic and general surgery. The editor, in turn, also wished to ensure that creative contributors would share their new techniques, with a link between recently established procedures and alternative surgical options that were up to date at the time of publication.

In the preface there is the stated aim of demonstrating options that are 'technically possible and experimentally proven but not applied clinically on a routine basis or even – as in the case of face transplant – not performed at the moment'. It must, therefore, have proved a little disappointing that a team at Amiens in France carried out the first partial facial transplant before the book was completed and has subsequently reported its work in *The Lancet*. It is also unfortunate that in the chapter covering the clinical application of composite tissue allografts the reference cited for the world's first tongue transplant is not from the team that performed the procedure.

Nevertheless, as the editor points out, we are witnessing major changes in the field of tissue surgery and there is no doubt that the rapidly developing new techniques have already stimulated not only surgical, but also philosophical and ethical, discussions that are likely to continue for some time. The editor is to be congratulated on successfully blending clinical and laboratory surgical research with advances in other scientific developments including the role of stem cells in surgery and the introduction of gene-modifying techniques in this field.

Technically, this hardback book is well presented on glossy paper and illustrated with colour photographs and