PostScript

BOOK REVIEWS

Handbook of exercise in diabetes, 2nd edn

Edited by John T Devlin, Stephen H Schneider. Published by American Diabetes Association, 2002, £51.50, hardcover, pp 699. ISBN 1580400191

This is the second edition of a substantial multi-authored work of more than 700 pages from the American Diabetic Association published in 2002. It aims to provide a practical yet comprehensive guide to diabetes and exercise for clinical health professionals. Let me say from the outset that this edition predominantly achieves this aim.

This "new" 2002 edition was prompted by the increasing scientific support for the role of exercise, diet, and weight loss in treatment and prevention of type 2 diabetes and its complications. Of interest is the evidence that exercise induced weight loss may be more beneficial than diet induced weight loss via its effects on insulin sensitivity and loss of abdominal fat.

The information in this book is comprehensive, with consideration of the effects of exercise on diabetes in gestational diabetes, the aged, children and adolescents, patients with disabilities, patients using insulin pumps, patients with diabetic complications, and those on various medication schedules. In amongst extensive biochemical and physiological data, the basic premises of interventions are emphasised. Very clear management protocols are provided for both type 1 and type 2 diabetics. There is a practical discussion of pre-participation screening of diabetics who wish to start an exercise programme (chapter 13) with sensible and cost effective guidelines and screening proformas, and a list of contraindications to exercise.

Most chapters start with highlight points and end with an extensive reference section.

Disappointingly, the area of nutritional strategies for physical activity and to optimise performance lacks practical detail to assist in advice to athletes. The discussion of insulin dose adjustments does not address the issues of "humanised" insulin and some of the problems associated with their introduction. The publication date of 2002 precludes many of the more recent research findings for diabetes.

However, these deficiencies are minor for a reference full of relevant information. Any professional working in exercise and sports medicine who deals regularly with diabetics would benefit from reading this book. I wish I had access to it when studying for my fellowship.

Rating

• Presentation	15/20
• Comprehensiveness	16/20
• Readability	14/20
• Relevance	17/20
• Evidence basis	19/20
• Total	81/100

Nutrition and Fitness, Obesity, The Metabolic Syndrome, Cardiovascular Disease and Cancer (Vol 94)

Edited by A P Simeopoulos. Published by S Karger AG: Basle, Switzerland; 2005, £136.57, pp 195. ISBN 3-8055-7945-4

The magnitude of the epidemic of obesity and its medical consequences, rising public awareness and the need for providing up-to-date information for health workers underpins the importance of this collection of reviews. It provides an authoritative and contemporary approach, featuring an Olympic link, a collection of current multinational experts and sound contemporary content.

It is a perennial debate as to whether limited resources for exercise and activity should be allocated to support small numbers of elite athletes at an event such as a World Cup or the Olympics, or spent on public health initiatives supporting increased overall populace physical activity. This book records events of a symposium held every 4 years to coincide with the Olympics. It provides a credible link between the Olympics and a broader public requirement. The forward by former Olympian and now public health physician Dr Elizabeth Ferris expresses this message eloquently.

One of the issues in attempting to keep abreast of medicine is that texts not uncommonly lag behind current journal literature. However, this volume presents a format that collates multiple authors, all experts from a variety of countries, each providing current high-level information and international comparative review.

Topics that are broadly covered include obesity gradings and definitions from different regions of the world, reviews and diagnoses of fat distribution and risk, role of omega 3/6, childhood obesity (Greece), recent review of metabolic syndrome, pathogens and rationale. The definition of metabolic syndrome and attempts to provide a pathophysiological explanation at cellular, sympathetic nervous system, metabolic and genetic levels are also covered.

The book does not provide content specific to medical or surgical management of obesity for an individual, but rather broader rationales for optimising nutrition and activity levels.

I strongly recommend it, particularly to medical practitioners who deal particularly with obesity—for example, surgeons performing obesity-correcting surgery, endocrinologists, as well as public health physicians and nutritionists.

Rating

• Presentation	17/20
• Comprehensiveness	16/20
• Readability	16/20
• Relevance	17/20
• Evidence basis	16/20
• Total	73/100

Drugs in sport

Edited by David R Mottram. Published by Taylor & Francis, 2005, £24.99, softcover, pp 420. ISBN 0415375649

This is a book covering all you ever needed to know about doping in sport and then some. It was a delight to read and review. Given that it weighs in at a little over 400 pages, that may seem strange, but it was interesting, easy to read, and covered each topic in depth, but in a way that was enjoyable to read.

The book covers areas such as the action and side effects of each major class of drugs used and the chemistry and pharmacology where it is relevant. There are enough anecdotes and relevant real life examples to keep things interesting. It acknowledges that issues in the area of doping in sport are constantly changing and discusses the past as well as tries to anticipate the future of this fascinating area. There is an interesting chapter on drug treatment of inflammation in sports injuries, which discusses the inflammatory response in detail, the treatment of such, and the mechanism of action of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), proteolytic enzymes, and anti-inflammatory glucocorticoids. Although one may argue that most of this chapter does not relate to doping, it fits in with other chapters, such as drug treatment in respiratory disorders, to add to the comprehensiveness and overall relevance of the text.

I found the historical perspective of doping fascinating, with respect to drug use and testing, and the development of doping agents and methods.

There is a chapter dedicated to the subject of creatine, its metabolism, and how it relates to energy metabolism, performance, and its health related aspects. Further than this the author offers a discussion of whether this supplement should be banned, and finally his own opinion. Similarly there are other practical discussions on controversial areas such as the banning of other nutritional supplements, caffeine, and whether drug testing is worth while. I enjoyed the discussion and comments on these areas and the opinions on what the future may hold.

The editor is David Mottram, a Professor of Pharmacy Practice at Liverpool John Moores University, UK. He is ably assisted in his work by a seven other experts in the area of doping and doping control. They are not afraid to offer their opinion; however, this is done in a balanced way, after due consideration of the facts presented in each chapter. The book is extensively referenced not only with regard to doping agents and methods, but also the anecdotes and real life experiences. Its evidence base is substantial.

I have always had an interest in doping and doping methods. It would have been relatively easy to write a factual textbook on this area, that was full of facts but short on interest. However, the authors have made the effort to put this book in context, back up the facts with interesting examples, give a historical and futuristic perspective, along with their opinions and relevant recommendations. This book would be an excellent addition to any person's

G Winter

Peter Baquie