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Sarmiento and Latta: Functional fracture bracing: A manual.
Lippincott, Hagerstown, 2002, 200 pages (ISBN: 0-7817-3729-X) US\$79.95

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Sarmiento and Latta have now summarised and published in a slim, elegant and richly illustrated book, their vast experience on functional fracture treatment. The book – or perhaps, rather, manual – primarily deals with closed diaphyseal fractures of the humerus, ulna and tibia. It contains four chapters, one for each of the above-mentioned anatomic localisations, and finally a chapter dealing with other indications for functional treatment. These indications include delayed union of the tibia, Colles' fractures, fractures of the femoral shaft and forearm fractures.

One of the purposes of the book is to identify fracture cases where non-surgical treatment is preferable. In each chapter, one therefore will find treatment rationale, including indications and contraindications. The book also contains recommendations on initial treatment modalities, as well as information on patient instruction, follow-up, expected outcome and management of compli-

cations. In a summary at the end of each chapter are basic guidelines for physicians as well as patients. The authors have provided in-depth information on the treatment of fractures and, when functional treatment is inappropriate, this is stated and recommendations for other treatments given. This is not a black-and-white consensus book but an intelligent manual leading the reader to find the optimal treatment in different cases.

In current textbooks, much emphasis is often placed on operative fracture management and less on conservative methods. Due to lack of skilled personnel, sufficient economics and technical facilities, internal fracture fixation may not always be possible. In this book, emphasis is placed on conservative treatment and therefore will be a sensible complement to include in the local library.

The book is abundantly illustrated, with a great number of black-and-white clinical photos and good quality radiograms. It is indexed, and each chapter contains a limited list of references, of which the majority are of Anglo-American descent. The typography is excellent, and it is the kind of book one would be proud to present as gift to a younger colleague.

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