Pulmonary Problems in Pregnancy

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ISBN: 978-1-934115-12-1

New York: Humana Press, 2009

The challenge of managing pulmonary problems in pregnancy is one that demands not only a thorough understanding of the normal physiological changes that arise but also a detailed knowledge of pulmonary issues that arise during pregnancy either as part of chronic respiratory disease or as a consequence of the pregnant state. This book is a welcome publication in this area that is relevant to trainees and consultants in the field of obstetrics, paediatrics, respiratory medicine, anaesthetics and critical care. It would serve as a useful reference text and as a revision text for postgraduate examinations. There is no doubt that the authors had a difficult task because of a paucity of evidence in many of the areas covered. Despite the lack of available data, this is a comprehensive and well-referenced book. In areas of limited evidence, the narrative is supplemented by the expert opinion. The book chapters are grouped into three parts: *Part 1* provides a description of normal physiology; *Part 2* reports on key management areas and *Part 3* focuses on specific conditions. The physiology section includes the transition from fetal to neonatal life and the effects of high altitude on maternal and fetal physiology, a topic that is both fascinating and relevant to the effects on maternal hypoxia in pregnancy. The difficulty in deciding when a pregnant woman's breathlessness is pathological rather than physiological is covered in the maternal respiratory section. The second section covers key areas in management: imaging, prescribing, fetal monitoring and anaesthetics. The diagnostic imaging section is both informative and reassuring, with tables on relative radiation exposure that would be

particularly useful when advising women and their families about the relative risks of undergoing imaging. The chapter on prescribing in pregnancy provides comprehensive reference tables on the safety of drugs commonly required in the treatment of respiratory disorders.

The book explores a wide range of acute and chronic pulmonary conditions in pregnancy. These include pneumonia, thrombo-embolic disease, acute lung injury through to asthma, neuromuscular diseases, cystic fibrosis and pulmonary hypertension. The book also provides a comprehensive review of sleep in pregnancy, a topic that is frequently overlooked. The prevalence of sleep disordered breathing is high but links with preeclampsia, fetal outcome and outcomes of treatment are as yet little evaluated. Although restless leg syndrome and periodic limb movement disorder lie at the periphery of pulmonary medicine, the high prevalence and associated morbidity in pregnancy justify a chapter on this under-recognized condition. Each chapter is structured in a unique way, avoiding repetitive formatting. However, the 'clinical pearls' used in one chapter might have been a useful summary reference in all chapters. Despite the relative paucity of evidence for management of pulmonary problems in pregnancy, the authors have provided a detailed text to evaluate the evidence available and, if appropriate, applied the evidence that already exists from the non-pregnant population. The book offers sound advice from experts who work in this field.

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DOI: 10.1258/om.2009.090046