BOOK REVIEW

Handbook of Neurosurgery, 7th Edition

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Thieme Medical Publishers, 2010 (ISBN 978-1-60406-326-4)

Scope: This handbook begins with conventions, evidence-based medicine guidelines, and reference to the government guidelines Web site. Some surgical procedures have guides to 'booking the case', and over 450 abbreviations are summarised over several pages. The 1,300 pages cover 35 chapters, beginning with chapters on neuroanaesthesia, critical/general care, and common neurological entities encountered by a neurosurgeon.

What follows are chapters covering neuroanatomy and physiology, neuroradiology, operations and procedures, developmental anomalies, toxicology, coma, brain death, cerebrospinal fluid, hydrocephalus, infections, seizures, spine/spinal cord, functional neurosurgery, pain, tumour, radiation therapy, peripheral nerves, neuro-ophthalmology, neuro-otology, head trauma, spine injuries, stroke, subarachnoid haemorrhage (SAH)/aneurysms, vascular malformations, intracerebral haemorrhage, and occlusive cerebrovascular disease. The concluding chapters deal with outcomes assessment and differential diagnosis before ending with an 88-page index listing over 3,500 items, followed by quick reference tables and a Rosenbaum eye chart with pupil gauge.

Strengths: Chapters on neuroanatomy and physiology, operations and procedures, developmental anomalies, coma/death, infections, spine and spinal cord, head trauma, SAH and aneurysms, and especially the chapter on tumour are all robust with extensive references.

Weaknesses: The chapter on neuroendovascular intervention is noticeably Spartan in an era where this area of practice is becoming increasingly an option and/or necessity for newly trained neurosurgeons. It is no longer the sole domain of interventional radiologists. A number of other chapters are also brief, but this may be due to the emphasis on matters of greater concern to neurosurgeons in training.

Recommended Audience: The book is a must for neurosurgery residents and useful quick reference for neuro-ophthalmologists, neurologists, and other practising physicians with patients who are about to be under the care of, under care of, or post care from neurosurgeons.

Critical Appraisal: This 7th edition is a good basic introduction to the specialty of neurosurgery. It belongs in every ophthalmology, neurology, and neurosurgery library as well as all medical school libraries.

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