



Disorders of Voluntary Muscle

Seventh Edition. Edited by George Karpati, David Hilton-Jones and Robert Griggs. Pp. xiv-775. Illustrated. R3 200. Cambridge University Press. 2001. ISBN 0-521-65062-3.

This book is extensively illustrated and presents the topics in great detail. There are comprehensive sections on the scientific basis of muscle disease; methods of investigation; clinical description of muscle disease, and principles of management.

The new edition includes chapters summarising the latest advances in molecular biology; immunopathology; mitochondrial biology; ion channel dynamics; signal transduction science, and imaging.

I strongly recommend this book for specialist neurologists and biomedical scientists with specific interests in the diseases of skeletal muscle.

Wayne Derman

Psychiatry and Primary Health Care

A Practical Guide for Health Care Workers in Southern Africa. Edited by Sean Baumann. Pp. xiv. + 525. R175. Juta & Company Ltd. 1999. ISBN 0-7021-4207-7.

The sub-title *A Practical Guide for Health Care Workers in Southern Africa* explains the nature of this book, as it is not laid out as a standard textbook of psychiatry according to the various disorders, but rather approaches it from the context of the person who presents to the health care worker.

The book consists of six main sections: the first and third sections are vital in terms of the approach used. The first section deals in some detail with the Southern African context of mental health care, including language and cultural issues and Southern African categories of distress. The section is unique to similar local publications and explains very complex issues in clear and relevant terms. The next section deals with management problems where the emphasis is on the presenting problem. Clinical assessment, differential diagnosis and practical management are discussed in detail.

The section which outlines legal aspects of psychiatric practice, and covers most of the pertinent issues, will need some revision of specific information once the new Mental Health Care Act is implemented.

Besides the very clear Southern African context and the practical problem-based approach, the use of case vignettes as well as user-friendly layout makes this book very appealing. Boxed tables and bulleted points highlight key points. There are also useful management guidelines as appendices.

This is a useful book for the main target audience: primary care practitioners (particularly GPs in both the public and

private sectors, primary health care nurses and other allied medical professionals). Considering the prevalence of mental disorders and the burden of disease resulting from such disorders, this should be made required reading material for all students in health disciplines. Psychiatrists, psychiatrists-in-training and other mental health professionals will find it extremely interesting and useful for their own work, and particularly for those training other health professionals.

Rita Thom

Drugs in Sport

The Pressure to Perform. BMAScience Department and the Board of Science and Education. Pp. x +165. R322. BMJ. 2002. ISBN 0-7279-1606-8.

The aim and scope of this publication of the British Medical Association (BMA) are to provide information to doctors on what they may and may not prescribe to sportspeople, and the medical consequences of the use of certain drugs. It also intends to raise awareness about the medical and ethical issues surrounding the use of drugs in sport.

The book gives a brief overview of the historical, legal and ethical background to the subject and discusses the International Olympic Committee's list of banned substances and methods. It also details the use of anabolic androgenic steroids by non-competitive groups. This publication will assist physicians and their patients through confusing regulations, and highlights the potentially serious medical consequences of drugs used for non-medical purposes in sport.

Case reports where patients ask advice on drug performance enhancement or when sportspeople require medication for therapeutic purposes which could contravene regulations, are detailed.

Although the book is based mainly on the BMA policy on doping in sport and recommended key actions by government, sporting organisations, health professionals, and a range of interested parties in England, health professionals in other parts of the world may benefit from these viewpoints. In a publication of this calibre however, one would expect to find a list of banned and permitted drugs in sport with their trade names as well.

Doping in high-level sport is on the increase for many reasons, including the medicalisation of sport, new pressures faced by athletes, and the increasing competitiveness, commercialisation and politicisation of sport. Any publication in this field educating doctors and athletes on the growing problems in sport, are welcome.

It is a pity that a publication sponsored by the BMA could not be offered at a more reasonable price.

D van Velden