Book Review

Magnetic Resonance Angiography
(2nd Revised Edition)
I. P. Arlart, G. M. Bongartz and G. Marchal.
Springer.
478 pages, price £209.

This is a hardbound book in the Diagnostic Imaging series of Springer’s Medical Radiology Books and is a second edition, following the popular first edition published in 1996. It is edited by I. P. Arlart (Stuttgart), G. M. Bongartz (Basle) and G. Marchal (Leuven) and consists of 478 pages with 345 figures and 704 illustrations. The Editors have managed to enlist the help of a Who’s Who of European magnetic resonance experts and, as such, the overall quality of the book is excellent. The first two chapters are by way of background – Chapter 1 Vascular Anatomy and Chapter 2 Definition of MR angiography. Both chapters are rather superficial and will not be of great use to vascular radiologists or vascular surgeons and is probably more directed at trainees of general radiologists. I am uncertain as to the need for Chapter 2 and I think that a more detailed anatomy section would be more useful.

Chapters 3–12 consist of 10 excellent chapters on basic principles and technical considerations for MR angiography and could be considered essential reading for radiologists working within the field of MRA and would be of value to the interested vascular clinician. The authors take us briskly, but thoroughly, through basic principles of MR imaging into the mysteries (but importance) of k-space and on into the range of flow dependent and flow independent MR angiographic methods. By and large this is an excellent and readable attempt to cover difficult concepts.

Chapters 13–23 consist of clinical applications of MR angiography and the methods and illustrations for the most part are of cutting-edge quality. The authors set high standards and radiologists reading the book should try to reproduce the same quality in their clinical practice. The only exceptions are the intracranial vessels and carotid and vertebral arteries chapters which I would consider to be “tired”. The quality of the illustrations in these sections is some way behind the rest of the book and the majority of the images, certainly the intracranial vessels, are from 1993. I was surprised that there was no reference to the truly dynamic MR angiographic methods that have been introduced recently (often called MR Digital Subtraction Angiography or time resolved MR angiography).

So who is going to buy the book? I think the main target audience are radiologists who have access to reasonably up-to-date MR systems and who have a sizeable vascular workload. The book can be used for background reference and also for expressing their needs to MR applications experts. Obviously the same can be said for trainees in radiology who except to have a similar workload in the future. I think the book would be a useful reference text for vascular surgeons and would be useful as a departmental bench book, certainly for trainees in vascular surgery who are perhaps not aware of the recent major steps forward within this field.

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