

Book Reviews

Technical Tips for Training Vascular Surgeons

B. D. Braithwaite and S. D. Parvin, eds.
ISIS Medical Media, 1997. Price £6.95.

During a conventional surgical training programme, all surgeons will recognise that a large amount of what is learnt is by advice or by anecdote. In this era of shortened surgical training and restriction of exposure to different trainers, this book provides a welcome treasury of advice, learnt by anecdotal cases, from some of the most well known vascular surgeons in the U.K.

This book is purely a collection advice or "tips" which the authors have conveniently grouped under appropriate headings. The subjects covered are: vascular assessment, aortic, carotid, peripheral bypass and venous surgery, with a final miscellaneous section for those tips that do not fit elsewhere. There is no discussion nor opinion given by the editors, allowing each bit of advice to be considered by the reader without prejudice. This is important, as several of the tips offer alternative methods of approaching the same problem and a few even appear to contradict each other. It is therefore left to the reader to judge the relative merits of the pearls cast before them. Each tip is credited to the surgeon who supplied it, giving a point of reference to the reader. A few well placed illustrations add humour and understanding to a couple of the more technically complicated entries.

This is a small book which is well laid-out and is easy to read. As is the nature with such collections, it is very easy to "dip" into and, when read with certain patients in mind, it can provide alternative techniques to try when difficulties arise. Although it is unlikely to be of use to a basic surgical trainee with limited vascular experience, this book should be of great interest to any practising vascular surgeon or surgical trainee with an interest in vascular surgery.

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and have picked up many tips that I will try, or modify for use, in my own practice. In view of this, I feel it might be churlish to complain that the price of £6.95 is excessive for a 31 page book. My main concern is that this might result in the book reaching a smaller audience than it

deserves. In addition, I would shy away from actually using a small number of the tips given in this book. One of the more useful pieces of advice that was given to me early in my training was by a renowned vascular surgeon who, once, when I had gone against his wishes, said "that is the value of advice. You should listen to it carefully . . . and then make up your own mind". I think that this is very relevant to one or two of the tips which I feel might not be as successful in my hands as they must be in their contributor's practice.

Overall, this is a very enjoyable book that will be of great interest to all of those who practice vascular surgery. Its format is original and stimulating without being proscriptive. I sincerely hope that it obtains the wide readership that it deserves.

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Vascular Surgery – A Comprehensive Review

W. S. Moore, ed. W.B. Saunders, 1997. 403 pages,
price £122.

This is the fifth edition of this book since 1983 and the editor has now decided that revision will occur every 3 years in order to provide up-to-date information. Compared with the first edition, all original chapters have been revised or replaced. With the same purpose, most of the authors have been progressively replaced. Each chapter has its own reference list followed by a number of reviewing questions on the topic. Reference lists and review questions have been updated regularly.

In this last edition, two new topics have been included: chapter 18 on endovascular grafting and chapter 43 on physiology and imaging of the peripheral lymphatic system. Endovascular grafting is a recent topic and all the devices on the market have been described and documented. The literature up to 1996 is also presented. The chapter provides a good overview of the endovascular approach to aneurysmal disease of the abdominal aorta. The normal physiology