Book Review


The editors have selected 101 international authors, most from the United Kingdom, to write 47 standardized chapters grouped into nine logical sections on the subject of emergency vascular conditions. While the sections are logically organized, concepts are often repeated in different chapters, although without much obvious contradiction. The authors describe both traditional (open) and emerging endovascular options in the management of vascular emergencies. This 2nd edition has added considerable new material from emerging technology and recent literature. Cross-referencing of subject matter covered in multiple chapters is helpful. I found the index incomplete and referred to the table of contents to search for subjects such as coagulation studies and their impact on diagnosis and treatment. The book is conveniently sized and practically written, but often from a traditional viewpoint with a paucity of supportive evidence based medicine data.

The paper quality, font size, subject headings, algorithms, and tables are easy to read and follow. The illustrations appear to have been drawn by a single artist and compliment the text very nicely.

The first 10-chapter section, General Considerations, and the 9th section, Special Acute Vascular Challenges, with its 7 chapters, contain a potpourri of material that does not fit comfortably in other sections. These two sections could be combined.

Sections 2–4 contain practical and traditional approaches to stroke, acute lower limb ischemia and acute swollen limbs. The fifth section, Thoracoabdominal Catastrophes, has 7 chapters and covers acute problems of aneurysm, infection, dissection, and aortic branch artery problems, including renal and mesenteric ischemia. The three chapters of the sixth section, Acute Complications of Endovascular Aortic Repair (EVAR), focus on the current complications of abdominal endografts but fail to emphasize the emerging concern about these complications. The cost differential of EVAR vs traditional treatment is not cited in detail. The five chapters of the 7th section, Regional Vascular Trauma, are especially detailed with traditional and emerging technology. The complex areas of thoracic outlet and retroperitoneal injuries are well covered. The eighth section, Iatrogenic Injuries, could benefit from more extensive and detailed review. Iatrogenic injury, such as complex injury to the iliac artery when inserting large thoracic aortic endografts, occurs more frequently than has been appreciated, but the book is silent in this regard.

The modern vascular surgeon should be expert in both open and endovascular techniques, particularly for emergency conditions. The book omits in any detail four compartment fasciotomy, clotting studies and their impact on diagnosis and treatment, and the emergence of the thromboelastogram. The specifics relating to the many co-morbid factors often present in patients with vascular emergencies, such as medication taken (anti-platelet drugs and coumadin), smoking, and other coexisting medical and surgical conditions are not addressed. The book could also benefit from a more detailed description of damage control tactics for the acute vascular emergency.

While there are areas that could have been expanded upon in greater detail, this book contains much valuable and practical information that would make it an important addition to the library of the general, vascular and acute care surgeon.

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