Fundamental Techniques of Plastic Surgery


Fundamental Techniques of Plastic Surgery aims to deliver a concise text for trainees in this specialty. The first edition of the book was published in 1960 and since then the text has gone through a number of modifications and improvements. The book is divided into 2 parts: Basic Techniques and Surgical Applications. In ‘Basic Techniques’ the chapters include; wound management, the Z-plasty, free skin grafts, flaps and additional techniques. The chapter on wound management is particularly good and does well to set the scene for the rest of the book. In ‘Surgical Applications’ the chapters include; hypertrophic scars and keloids, radiation injury, pressure sore management, limb trauma, neoplastic conditions and hand surgery.

There is an obvious bias on limb reconstruction, and a similar level of detail is not applied when discussing breast reconstruction. This may be because the basic techniques can be more easily illustrated using the limbs. The entire book is written by the same group of authors and this helps to maintain a consistency of style and expression which can suffer in some multi-author books.

The chapters are certainly concise and describe each basic technique with precision and clarity. This helps to make the book easier to carry and this can be particularly useful reading for the trainee wherever they find themselves. There is little discussion and debate of the controversial issues and there is little mention of the latest techniques which are yet to be fully approved or accepted. There is little reference to the literature and of the techniques described would be out of date by the time readers assimilate the information (but you have to start somewhere). The price could also be seen as a deterrent; however, it is a hardback printed in full colour with 479 illustrations, good paper quality and the price is also consistent with other books of this genre currently on the market.

Overall, this book provides some unique insights in particular areas of cosmetic surgery, but falls short of being a comprehensive review. Nevertheless, the inclusion of certain chapters not featured in other books of this nature makes it a worthwhile addition to the reference collection of the cosmetic surgeon or plastic surgical trainee.

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