BOOK REVIEWS

John M. Porter, MD, Book Review Section Editor

The sapheno-femoral junction

The last few years have seen major changes in vascular surgery, mainly because the discipline is continuously evolving as a result of the emergence of the increasing importance placed on aesthetic aspects. In general, venous disorders originate from ostial reflux. Consequently, attention has focused on the saphenofemoral junction viewed not merely as the site of the ostial valve, but rather as an anatomic-physiologic complex that includes the common femoral vein, the femoral terminal valve, the saphenous valve, and collateral veins.

This volume, The Sapheno-Femoral Junction is unusual in several respects. First, its scope is limited. The authors do not attempt to cover the whole area of venous disease, rather they restrict themselves to the impairment of the saphenofemoral junction. Second, the book deals exclusively with the anatomy and the pathophysiology of the saphenofemoral junction. Notwithstanding its limited scope, this small volume is comprehensive and eminently practical. The section on saphenous collateral branches is the highlight of the book. Although many volumes devoted to vascular surgery comment on the extreme variability of the collateral branches of the saphenofemoral junction from subject to subject, they provide only a series of drawings that are often a source of confusion to the reader. In The Sapheno-Femoral Junction the contrary, the different configurations of the collateral veins are illustrated by schematic drawings, easily committed to memory, each accompanied by excellent photographs of the regional anatomy. Less successful is the section on diagnosis. In fact, echographic data are lacking, and little, if anything, is said about the Doppler technique, which is widely used in the study of the saphenofemoral junction and that often provides comprehensive information even without B-mode recording.

Although this book is in Italian, its contents are accessible to non-Italian speakers because of the excellent illustrations and photographs. The book is addressed to both vascular surgeons and angiologists. Although the former will prize this volume as a valuable resource, other readers may feel a certain frustration that its contents have not been interpreted more fully.

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Ischemia-reperfusion injury of skeletal muscle
Gary A. Fantini, Austin, 1994, RG Landes Company, 161 pages, $89.95.

Over the past 20 years, ischemia-reperfusion injury has come under intense investigation. New information from both clinical and laboratory investigations has shed light on the pathophysiology of this problem. Early studies focused on simple ischemia as the cause of injury. Now we know that the pathophysiologic mechanisms of ischemic injury are more complex than that. Presently, it is believed that the reperfusion phase of injury can cause more harm than simple ischemia alone. In the book entitled Ischemia-Reperfusion Injury of Skeletal Muscle, Dr. Fantini's collection of review chapters is an attempt to survey current knowledge of ischemia-reperfusion injury.

This is a short book of only 156 pages, broken down into nine chapters, each written by different authors. Seven review various pathophysiologic studies of ischemia-reperfusion injury, one is a historical perspective, and the final chapter is entitled "Remote effects: Lung injury." As with many books written by multiple authors, the content, readability, and timeliness of chapters varies. The chapter on reactive oxygen metabolites and their consequences and the chapter on the role of neutrophils are both superbly written. They are well organized and contain contemporary references into 1994. They serve to define the state-of-the-art of basic laboratory research and should be read by anyone with an interest in this field.

Not unexpectedly in a book written by 18 contributing authors, there exists significant overlap. This is not so much a criticism of this book, but more a comment on the state of the research in ischemia-reperfusion injury. Some chapters are quite short, to the point of being cursory. There are a few chapters in which the bulk of references are from the late 1980s, with only a few being within the last 4 to 5 years. Another problem that plagues some books written by multiple authors is the problem of scientific prejudice. In certain chapters, authors have decided their own research is more important than studies by others, to the point of minimizing or even ignoring other significant research.

The final chapter in the book is on "Remote effects: Lung injury." This is obviously an interesting and important field of scientific pursuit. The authors do a superb job in summarizing recent information in respect to ischemia-reperfusion and lung injury. However, what about the other remote effects of ischemia-reperfusion? The oldest and best known ischemia-reperfusion effects are those of renal injury after skeletal muscle injury. This topic should have been discussed, if just for historic interest. In addition, multiple effects of ischemia-reperfusion on the myocardium have been documented. It would make this chapter a lot more complete if it had not been limited solely to lung injury and simply entitled "Remote effects."

In conclusion, this book serves a specific purpose. The book is not intended for the audience of all vascular specialists, but is intended for those with a scientific interest in ischemia-reperfusion injury. In the opening paragraph of the first chapter, the author quotes The Lives of a Cell,
stating "great new blocks of information are being brought in almost daily and put precisely down in what were previously empty spaces." This book summarizes those spaces that have been filled in during the past 10 to 15 years. It is recommended reading for a person working in or entering the field of ischemia-reperfusion research. Again, it is likely to hold little interest for the vascular surgeon in clinical practice.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

The receipt of the books listed below is acknowledged. This listing is regarded as appropriate return for the courtesy of the sender. The books that are of particular interest will be reviewed and the review published as space permits.

General surgery

Cardiovascular medicine

Textbook of clinical echocardiography

Nicotine addiction: Principles & management

Infections associated with indwelling medical devices

Regulation of the vascular endothelium: Signals and transduction mechanisms
Jean-Marie Boeynaems, Sabine Pirotton, Austin, 1994, RG Landes, 117 pages, $89.95.

Thrombin, thrombomodulin and the control of hemostasis
John C. Giddings, Georgetown, 1994, RG Landes, 186 pages, $89.95.

Oxford textbook of surgery, volume I and II

Alternatives to open vascular surgery

Hernia, 4th edition

Oxford textbook of surgery, volume 1 and 2

Hypertension: Pathophysiology, diagnosis, and management, volume 1 and 2

Angiotsensin

Cardiac surgery: Biological and psychological implications

Gross anatomy in the practice of medicine

Flow-dependent regulation of vascular function

Review of vascular surgery

Clinical cardiac pacing

The ischemic extremity: Advances in treatment

Reperfusion injuries and clinical capillary leak syndrome

Methods in enzymology, volume 234

NMR in physiology and biomedicine

Vascular access in the cancer patient

Primer of noninvasive vascular technology

Endoluminal vascular prostheses