



CLINICAL URINALYSIS

R G Newall and R Howell (eds)

Miles Ltd, Stoke Poges, Buckinghamshire (1990)

132 pages. Price £6.50

This book brings together a series of short contributions by a number of authors on various aspects of urinalysis. An introductory section is followed by disease related sections on glycosuria, haematuria, proteinuria and so on. The third part of the book is practice related, dealing with urine testing in paediatric departments, in jaundiced infants, in school children, in antenatal practice, in the hospital and the community, in the elderly, in patients with abdominal pain and in general practice.

There is something for everyone in such a book, with perhaps too much for the generalist and not enough for those with a special interest in the subject. The quality of the contributions is uneven but mention should be made of an excellent overview of urinary tract infection by Professor Sussman.

Clinical urinalysis can be read in an afternoon; an investment of time which is probably worthwhile for trainees in primary care or community medicine.

R N GRÜNEBERG

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DILEMMAS AND DIFFICULTIES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS

Keith Hawton and Philip Cowen (eds)

Oxford University Press (1990)

257 pages. Price £35.00

The British approach to providing medical care embodies the principle of a first contact doctor (the general practitioner) backed by a referral system through which a second opinion can be obtained from a specialist without the general practitioner losing overall responsibility for the patient. One reason for referral to a specialist is when general practitioners recognize that they are unfamiliar with the management most likely to benefit a particular patient.

This book is aimed at constructing rational management strategies to be applied by specialist psychiatrists faced with the need to choose between unfamiliar treatments when a routine or familiar approach fails. As I started to read this book I wondered whether I would find it instructive and helpful in the management of my own patients or whether it would deal with matters which rarely presented to me. There are 20 chapters each by an author or authors with particular clinical and research interest in the problems posed. There are few chapters from which a general practitioner would not learn a great deal; there are some which should be mandatory reading. Among the latter group Michael Gelder's chapter 'Anxiety disorders: what are the alternatives to prolonged use of benzodiazepines?' is outstan-

ding while T R E Barnes' chapter 'Tardive dyskinesia; can it be prevented?' is of particular importance as the long-term mentally ill are returned to the community and the continuing care of general practitioners. To pick out further chapters would be simply to emphasize my own particular interests and identify my clinical shortcomings.

This book should be available for all general practitioners to dip in to. Among the most important things we can learn from it is that specialists know themselves to be fallible, that for some problems we have yet to determine any reliable solutions, but that these difficulties can be reduced by an appropriate combination of research findings and clinical experience intermingled with a sense of responsibility and a dash of professional courage. It is an important lesson for us all.

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SPORTS INJURIES

Recognition and management

M A Hutson (ed)

Oxford University Press (1990)

234 pages. Price £45.00

This is an excellent book, edited and largely written by Dr Michael Hutson, whose background is in general practice. Sections on subjects such as head and spinal injuries, hand and shoulders injuries and investigative techniques are written by specialists in those areas. The book is aimed at all practitioners dealing with the recognition and management of injury related to sports. As the author feels that future specialists in sports injuries will largely come from general practitioners, the text is particularly directed at this group although there is much in it for those in other disciplines.

A practical approach to the problems of sports injuries is set out with emphasis on the early assessment of severity. The importance of making an accurate assessment before appropriate management can begin is emphasized. Concise explanations of applied anatomy and biomechanics are given together with good diagrams. The problems of overuse injuries form a large part of the text and mechanisms causing these are discussed fully. The book clearly describes methods of examination of the musculoskeletal system, together with several useful summaries of examination procedures. Recognition of fractures is emphasized but generally fractures are not dealt with in depth.

Management is more than just treatment of the injury and this is stressed throughout the book. Examples include maintenance of fitness during recovery, discussions with parents and coaches about expectations when children are involved and perhaps most importantly, the prevention of further problems. The author clearly expresses the view that all in the profession

have a responsibility for prevention whenever an opportunity arises. This is most important when relating to head, eyes and spine: 'The first law of head injury — "Prevention is better than cure" ... The second law of head injury is "If you can't prevent, protect".'

Sport for all could mean sports injuries for all, but this does not need to be the case. *Sports injuries: recognition and management* will be very useful to doctors of first contact with injuries, sports or otherwise. Perhaps the book should also be read by those who have no interest in this field as there is much in it for them to consider.

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EMPLOYING STAFF (4th edition)

Norman Ellis

British Medical Journal, London (1990)
121 pages. Price £7.95

The fact that this is the fourth edition of this useful little book speaks for itself. The author is well known as a member of the staff of the British Medical Association who has been involved for many years in helping practices who have organizational problems.

The world of staff employment is now a complex minefield of potential litigation for the unwary and judging by some of the cases quoted, doctors fall into this category. Most of the book deals with issues arising from contract law and covers many difficult areas such as the rights of expectant mothers or the problems associated with dismissing staff. Regulations have also changed in regard to the appointment of part-time staff so updating was required in this area. On this and many other issues the book gives clear directions and, where necessary, sources of further reference.

This book is concise and invaluable to any practice. The target audience should really be practice managers rather than general practitioners but it is probably required reading for anyone who is involved in employing staff.

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TOTAL PARTICIPATION — TOTAL HEALTH Reinventing the Peckham experiment for the 1990s

Alex Scott-Samuel (ed)

Scottish Academic Press, Edinburgh (1990)
45 pages. Price £3.50

I had previously read about the Peckham health centre in the context of providing total care to a community and I regarded it as too difficult to revive in the 1990s. This little book took me through the history of the experiment, its founding ideals and some of the reasons for its demise. It was first considered in 1925, but planning and fund raising began in earnest in 1929. It was opened in 1935 and closed in 1950 because of government indifference and lack of financial assistance.

'The centre' as it was called locally was a place where all the family could come and spend their leisure time and also see the doctor for an annual overhaul. There was a swimming pool, gymnasium, badminton court/theatre, adult's games area, children's and babies' play areas and a cafeteria which doubled as a dance hall. It enriched the lives of those who attended, encouraged individuality, spontaneity and responsibility and carried out serious scientific research as shown by a series of published papers. The pioneers of this experiment concentrated on health rather than disease in a holistic manner. Families at-

tended together and the annual overhaul encompassed their biological, nutritional, medical and social development and functioning.

In the 1980s we rediscovered health promotion, accepted holistic care and complementary or 'alternative' therapies, recognized the importance of diet in healthy living and saw the foolishness of destroying our environment. The new contract should encourage preventive aspects of health care, but will it lead to greater patient participation? Can we provide social support systems which contribute so much to people's enjoyment and quality of life? The Peckham health centre will be hard to emulate.

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health care, University College and Middlesex School of
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HRT AND OSTEOPOROSIS

J O Drife, J W W Studd (eds)

Springer-Verlag, London (1990)
394 pages Price £60.00

'A realistic HRT [hormone replacement therapy] service for the UK would be GP based, using opposed oestrogen therapy without routine endometrial biopsy but with gynaecology clinic support for endometrial biopsy after abnormal bleeding. Breast self-examination should be encouraged and these women should make use of the national breast screening programme.'

This is the view of David Barlow who provides a superb summing up of the present situation regarding the use of hormone replacement therapy in the community. David Barlow is one of the contributors to *HRT and osteoporosis*, an interesting and worthwhile collection of the papers presented at the 22nd study group of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, held in January 1990.

The format consists of short chapters with clear illustrations followed by lively discussion of controversial issues. Rapid publication has ensured that up-to-date information is given on pituitary function, hormones acting on bones, experimental work on collagen, the shortcomings of much experimental work on depression, the treatment of depression with oestrogen, patients' views of osteoporosis and the cardiovascular effects of oestrogen and the combined oral contraceptive pill. An important discussion on the effects of oestrogen and the combined oral contraceptive pill on the risk of breast cancer is also presented. A series of recommendations at the end of the book allows the individual general practitioner and the individual patient to formulate a practical policy for the use of hormone therapy.

HRT and osteoporosis is that rarity, a comprehensive and authoritative collection of original research and debate which is still up-to-date by the time that it is printed. Buy it now or recommend it for the shelves of your local postgraduate library.

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MEDICAL POWER IN PRISONS

The prison medical service in England 1774-1989

Joe Sim

Open University Press, Buckingham (1990)
212 pages. Price £10.99 (p/b), £32.50 (h/b)

This book looks at the prison medical service from a sociological standpoint. It makes difficult and disturbing reading. Indeed, some of the propositions challenge the professional view of the doctor as the advocate of the patient within prisons.