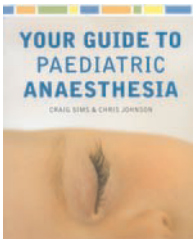
Book reviews

Stimulant for anaesthetists



Your guide to paediatric anaesthesia. Craig Sims, Chris Johnson. Sydney: McGraw-Hill 2011 (374 pp, $129.95). ISBN 9780071000222.

THIS GUIDE aims to provide expert practical information across the breadth of paediatric anaesthesia without getting bogged down by details. The vast clinical experience of the editors (and their team of contributors) ensures that these aims are fulfilled in an informed, practical way.

Chapters covering basic science and techniques relating to anaesthesia and resuscitation for children are complemented by others discussing anaesthesia for a comprehensive range of surgical subspecialities as well as for specific paediatric conditions. Care has been taken to include discussion of current issues that have generated controversy.

The target audience includes trainees wanting a pithy summary of paediatric anaesthesia to inform their clinical experience and assist in preparation for exams. Both editors are examiners for the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, which means they understand how high the bar is for those exams. The general anaesthetist with an interest in paediatrics wanting an easy-to-read update will also be well served.

The book reads very comfortably, often with the tone of the consultant who has an interest in teaching, but the style does not allow for exhaustive explanation, detailed debate over alternative approaches or extensive referencing. However, it is sure to be stimulating for the career paediatric anaesthetist.

The search for academic defensibility has led to some bloated, heavily referenced texts that often leave the reader wondering what they would actually do when confronted with a clinical scenario. The source of much clinical teaching is expert opinion, as a consultant works with a trainee. This volume gives expert opinion a voice. Neither online resources nor standard tomes on the topic address the needs of those this volume aims to assist. It is a great resource for trainees and anaesthetists with a paediatric interest and promises to be a springboard for discussion among paediatric anaesthetists.

Ian M McKenzie
Director
Department of Anaesthesia and Pain Management
Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, VIC
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