Book Review

FIFTY NEUROLOGICAL CASES FROM THE MAYO CLINIC

John H. Noseworthy, Ed. 218 pp., Ill. Oxford University Press, 2004, \$40

This compact 218-page book presents 50 short neurologic cases that were diagnosed at the Mayo Clinic. This monograph is patterned after Drs. Willis and Marsden's *Fifty Neurological Cases from the National Hospital*. The book is composed of 50 unusual cases including history, physical examination, and laboratory investigations, each succinctly presented on a single page. A case is often introduced with a catchy title based on the patient's chief complaint. The reader is then challenged to localize the lesion and generate a differential diagnosis before turning the page to receive a brief commentary by expert Mayo Clinic neurologists, including Drs. Robert Brown, Peter Dyck, Andrew Engel, Claudia Lucchinetti, Moses Rodriguez, Ronald Peterson, and Eelco Wijdicks. The commentary section often includes high-quality neuroimaging pictures, pathology slides, and descriptive diagrams that highlight key features of the disease in question. A single reference is offered at the end of the commentary for the reader if s/he wants to pursue further learning on this topic.

A wide range of challenging cases is presented, from semantic dementia to Morvan syndrome to hereditary neuropathy with liability to pressure palsies or even Susac syndrome. Both adult (i.e., REM sleep disorder due to Lewy body dementia) and pediatric (i.e., chronic infantile neurologic cutaneous and articular/neonatal-onset multisystem inflammatory disease) cases are covered with a special focus on neuro-oncology (paraneoplastic autonomic neuropathy and limbic encephalitis), neuromuscular diseases (presynaptic congenital myasthenic syndrome due to acetyltransferase deficiency), and epilepsy

(steroid-responsive Hashimoto encephalopathy presenting as status epilepticus). The intended audience is medical students, neurology residents, neurosurgeons, and other clinicians involved in caring for patients with neurologic diseases.

Although this small paperback book runs the gamut of neurologic disease, the choice of cases clearly draws from the strength of the Mayo Clinic's vast referral base to focus on extremely unusual disorders. My informal poll of residents and fellows at several institutions found that a total of only five or six of the cases had been ever seen by any of them. The cases presented in this book are those often only heard about but rarely seen.

The book may be most useful to more experienced residents who want to fill in the gaps in their knowledge concerning uncommon disorders. It may be less appropriate for junior neurology residents or medical students on their first neurology rotation. This compendium of uncommon cases is needed precisely because most residents have not seen these disorders during their training and need this exposure if they are ever presented with such complicated patients. Such unusual cases, although rare in clinical practice, may be endemic on the Residency In-service Training Exam and formal American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology written examination, a further advantage of this text for the typical neurology trainee.

Future editions might be improved by allowing experts at the Mayo Clinic to share their thoughts as to how they initially approached these unusual and difficult cases. At less than \$40.00, this book belongs in all departmental libraries and deserves the attention of all neurology residents and fellows.

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