Book Review

PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHIES IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

edited by Steven Herskovitz, Stephen Scelsa, and Herbert Schaumburg, 408 pp., Oxford University Press, 2010, \$125

Peripheral neuropathies are often challenging to neurology residents and general neurologists. In addition, most neurology residencies focus more on inpatient rather than outpatient neurology, which results in less exposure to peripheral neuropathies. This makes the recently published *Peripheral Neuropathies in Clinical Practice*, part of the Contemporary Neurology Series, a much welcomed book.

Peripheral Neuropathies in Clinical Practice is an updated version of *Disorders of Peripheral Nerves*, published in 1992. While the previous version of the text focused on the pathology of neuropathies, the current version is more clinically based. The book covers peripheral neuropathies only, and does not include central disorders of the motor neuron unit, such as motor neuron diseases and infectious polio-like syndromes, or neuromuscular junction disorders.

The first 4 chapters of the book cover basic concepts of pathophysiology and evaluation techniques for patients with peripheral neuropathies. There is a later chapter that presents a dozen clinical scenarios followed by differential diagnoses, laboratory results, electrodiagnostic evaluation, and final diagnosis. These illustrative cases are an excellent introduction to understanding the clinical reasoning behind clinical neuropathies. The next 12 chapters cover the different neuropathies, from immune-mediated to metabolic and toxic, hereditary, neoplastic, infectious, and those associated with systemic disease. The last 3 chapters describe the focal neuropathies, plex-

opathies, and hyperexcitability disorders. The text was written by 3 expert clinicians who not only refer to the latest literature—making the content up-to-date—but also to their own experience when the literature is insufficient or inconclusive. The book, although comprehensive, remains concise. There are numerous tables, drawings, and diagrams as well as several colored pathology plates of high quality. For example, chapter 3 consists of several tables outlining the differential diagnosis of neuropathies. These tables would be useful when trying to quickly formulate a differential diagnosis in a patient with, for example, a peripheral neuropathy and a concomitant myopathy.

The authors successfully present a practical approach to peripheral neuropathies. Whereas there are several other books on the subject—some of them covering motor neuron diseases and disorders of neuromuscular junction—this text is concise and well-written, making it readable cover-to-cover in a couple of weeks. The numerous tables and figures help integrate the knowledge and form a quick reference when evaluating a patient with a peripheral neuropathy. The book is affordable and small, making it easy to carry during the neuromuscular rotation or in the clinic. However, if a more thorough understanding of electrophysiology is required, one should consider a different text. I enjoyed reading *Peripheral Neuropathies in Clinical Practice* and would recommend it to both trainees and practicing neurologists.

Reviewed by Chafic Karam, MD

Disclosure: Dr. Karam serves on the editorial team for the Neurology® Resident & Fellow Section and is training at the same institution where Dr. Stephen Scelsa, one of the authors of the book, is a teacher.
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