Book Review

EPILEPSY IN CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

by Richard Appleton and John Gibbs, 160 pp., Taylor & Francis, \$47.95

Epilepsy is a heterogeneous disorder with myriad causes, manifestations, treatments, and prognoses. Pediatric epilepsies in particular are often a source of confusion for students, trainees, and primary care physicians. The concise and well-written third edition of *Epilepsy in childhood and adolescence* by two UK-based epileptologists is aimed at this audience. The book can be read over the course of one or two evenings and provides in the course of 14 chapters an overview of the manifestations, diagnosis, and management of childhood epilepsy.

The introductory chapter covers the epidemiology of childhood epilepsy and seizures, and their consequences. The way these numbers are presented may be useful to clinicians counseling patients and parents. In subsequent chapters, the authors discuss the diagnosis and classification of childhood epilepsy and seizure semiology. The diagnostic framework for epilepsy is currently under revision so both the old and new International League Against Epilepsy (ILAE) diagnostic schemes are provided. This may be somewhat confusing to the uninitiated, but the authors do a good job of explaining the differences and justification for the new scheme. Most of the epilepsy syndromes are cursorily covered in sidebars and

tables. The chapters on epilepsy etiology provide a good overview of the causes of symptomatic epilepsy, but the brief chapter on genetics glosses over the inheritance patterns of idiopathic epilepsies and neglects many of the monogenetic syndromes. Additional chapters focus on febrile and neonatal seizures. A chapter is dedicated to adolescent epilepsy, and not only discusses common syndromes in this age group, but also the special psychosocial issues surrounding the care of teenagers with epilepsy. Finally, chapters on the medical treatment of epilepsy and status epilepticus are presented based on both evidence from the literature and many years of clinical experience. While US readers may find the specifics in these chapters less useful because of differing medication availability and practices in the United Kingdom, the authors' general principles of treatment are helpful.

Throughout the book, key points are highlighted and summarized in boxes, and most of the figures are clear and enhance the text. However, the layout of the book, which uses a two-column text on relatively small pages, makes the book unnecessarily busy. Despite its design flaws, the book is useful for first-year child neurology residents, adult neurology residents approaching their child neurology rotation, and general pediatricians and family physicians who care for children with epilepsy.

Reviewed by Daniel Friedman, MD

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