Book Review

HANDBOOK OF STROKE, 2ND EDITION

by D.O. Wiebers, V.L. Feigin, R.D. Brown Jr.,
480 pp., Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, \$49.95

To a resident, truly useful books must be reached for as eagerly at 4 AM as they are at 4 PM, and the *Handbook of Stroke* evinces this ideal. Concise, carefully detailed chapters are perfect for the doctor-on-call's attention span and take the necessary leap from providing differential diagnoses to recommending therapeutic goals and plans, disorder by disorder. Comfortably fitting into a lab coat pocket, most chapters are less than 10 pages, with topic headings bolded for easy reading and reference.

Particularly useful are sections entirely dedicated to prognostic evaluation and management of stroke in special groups (e.g., pregnant women, young adults). Ensuring that this book will never collect dust is a lush array of appendices illustrating and outlining the facts, scales, and anatomy one should know as a resident.

Although text-laden at times, the diagrams complement the text well and capitalize on the fundamental aspects of stroke neurology. Expert

discussions on cerebrovascular genetics, depression, and chronic non-neurologic complications of stroke, as well as oft-neglected topics such as speech therapy, may educate health care workers and trainees at various levels and can do so with a quick read. A recommendation for the third edition would be to replace the suggested reading list at the end of each section with references by chapter.

The greatest strength of the *Handbook* is that this book is true to its title: it begins and ends with clinically relevant information. There are no detours through a history of stroke or the debacle of dwelling on uncommonly encountered disorders. The text moves gently from assessment, management, and treatment to prevention and rehabilitation. Because the *Handbook* avoids some of the difficult and complicated end-of-life issues in stroke, but includes all the exuberance of management and prevention, one can easily forget while reading (but not while on the wards) that stroke is still a commonly fatal disease.

Reviewed by Farrah J. Mateen, MD

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