Book Reviews

**Paediatric Psychopharmacology: Combining Medical and Psychological Interventions**  
By LeAdelle Phelps, Ronald T Brown, and Thomas J Power  
Washington DC, American Psychological Association, 2001, pp 288, £35.95, US$99.95  
ISBN 0 7279 1228 3 (Paperback)

This book was written by psychologists, and although it is aimed primarily at psychologists working within paediatrics, it will be equally useful for all non-medical professionals working with children. The authors have succeeded in their aim to provide up-to-date information on drugs used in treating children and have also provided unique guidance on combining medical treatments with the most effective, empirically-based psychosocial treatments. By structuring the book in this way the authors address the importance of a multidisciplinary and integrated approach to treating children effectively.

The book is organized by type of disorder rather than by medication class, providing key information on anxiety and mood disorders, externalizing and psychotic disorders, elimination disorders, tics and Tourette’s syndrome, as well as mental retardation, and autistic spectrum disorders.

There is an interesting discussion about the role of the psychologist in medication management and the authors also briefly debate the issue of prescription privileges for psychologists. There is also a thoughtful discussion on how to understand and overcome the reluctance of children and families to begin and/or to adhere to treatment.

The book is user-friendly and jargon-free. It is well structured with easy-to-read tables of medications – those which are clinically validated for use with children and those which are not – together with information about the potential adverse effects of each medication.

I have already recommended this volume to several colleagues as I believe it is a useful reference text for psychologists and non-medical professionals working with children with mental health problems.

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*Frances Carroll*

**Imaging of the Cervical Spine in Children**  
By Leonard E Swischuk  
New York, Springer-Verlag, 2002, pp 141, £70.00, US$99.00  
ISBN 0 387 95290 X (Hardback)

This book relates the author’s clinical experience in pediatric radiology as Director of Pediatric Radiology at the Children’s Hospital at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston. It provides a concise overview of the essential pathological conditions of the pediatric cervical spine, ranging from an introduction on developmental anatomy to anomalies, trauma, and miscellaneous conditions. The text is clearly written and supported by a wealth of excellent radiographs supplemented by some CT images and a few MRI studies. However, the chapters are somewhat arbitrarily divided; normal variations and anomalies could have been considered together in a more comprehensive fashion.

The references are somewhat limited, particularly in the chapters concerning developmental anatomy and anomalies of the cervical spine. For example, none of the basic anatomical research of Ogden or Fielding is cited in the bibliography.

The description of trauma and specific injuries is well outlined and provides an excellent introduction to the reader interested in the cervical spine. A more complete discussion of the specific indications and results of MRI imaging would be of value as this modality has become readily available in most hospital settings.

Infection and inflammatory conditions are well outlined. However, miscellaneous cervical spine problems are dealt with in a somewhat cursory fashion and the subject of neoplastic disease is very briefly covered.

In summary, this is a good introductory text to the subject of pediatric cervical spinal conditions. It will be of interest to the pediatric community in general and serve as a good reference for the physician whose practice includes a pediatric component.

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*John V Banta*

**Consent, Rights and Choices in Health Care for Children and Young People**  
British Medical Association  
ISBN 0 7279 1228 3 (Paperback)

There is an increased awareness these days of children’s autonomy and of the importance of health professionals providing young patients and their parents with as much relevant and clear information as is possible. This book addresses the ethical issues that are most commonly raised by doctors who treat young people. Issues that relate to confidentiality, research, and health care are discussed in detail.

Each section of the book is relatively self-contained and there are particularly helpful sections on the legal framework for England and Wales and Scotland, and on assessing children’s competence to make choices. Similarly, there is a helpful section on controversial procedures (which, perhaps, illustrates difficulties rather than offering solutions) and good guidance on research and innovative treatments.

I see this as a very helpful reference work for paediatricians and for other health professionals who work with children. However, I would have liked to have seen further discussion on communication between professionals and on interdisciplinary working.

This as a very valuable reference work and I strongly recommend it.

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*Lewis Rosenbloom*
Tumours of the Pediatric Central Nervous System
Edited by Robert F Keating, James Tait Goodrich, and Roger J Packer
New York/Stuttgart, Thieme, 2001, pp 560, £192.00, US$199.00
ISBN 3 13 126951 0 (Europe), 0 86577 848 5 (US)

The editors introduce this textbook with the sentiment that treatment for children’s CNS tumours is becoming increasingly complex and that the definition of ‘state-of-the-art’ therapy constantly changes. They hope to have provided a comprehensive text that bridges the gap between primary care and the specialists’ focus; in general, they have succeeded in their aim.

This is a very comprehensive and clearly written and presented text. The radiographic and histological images included are clear and appropriate and an excellent clinico-pathological description is given for each of the major tumour types, with detailed descriptions of surgical interventions and techniques.

Section 1 opens with an historical account of surgical developments over the past two centuries. Although this is an interesting account, the chapter does not really include much detail of the history of neurosurgical developments in relation to children, i.e. the first clinical use of ultrasonic aspirators, etc. Very comprehensive chapters covering radiology, clinical features, surgical neuropathology, and anaesthetic/critical care are covered. The chapter covering radiotherapy is clearly presented with thought given to the non-radiation oncologist. However, a description of any dosage-response relationships for the common CNS tumours, and a description of how contemporary treatment regimens for radiotherapy were arrived at might have been a worthwhile inclusion. This section also provides an excellent overview of chemotherapy in which the concepts of chemosensitivity, the importance of the blood brain barrier, and definitions of early and phase III clinical trials are given. Although this underpins a thorough description of the major clinical chemotherapy trials that have been performed for childhood glioma, ependymoma, primitive neuroectodermal tumours and other CNS tumours, more emphasis might have been made of the paucity of formalized phase II trials in the area of paediatric neuro-oncology.

In Section 2 all the major childhood CNS tumours are discussed individually in terms of their epidemiology, clinical finding, investigation, and treatment. In particular, the clinico-pathological descriptions are excellent, especially the description of brainstem glioma and the phakomatoses. The discussions of therapy are very comprehensive in terms of surgery and radiotherapy. However, it is sometimes necessary to refer back to Section 1 for information regarding the major clinical chemotherapy trials for individual tumour types. In addition, separate chapters are allocated for supratentorial, as opposed to infratentorial glioma, ependymoma, and primitive neuroectodermal tumour. This results in some replication of information. For some of the chapters, some minor comments can be made. For example, for optic nerve glioma, more detail could have been given to the natural history of the disease following chemotherapy and radiotherapy, and the complications such as stroke that are reported to follow radiotherapy for optic chiasm/hypothalamic tumour in children with NF-1. Also, whereas for infant CNS tumours a very detailed description of tumour demographics is made, less detail is given of the response to chemotherapy regimens.

In Section 3 a detailed overview of paediatric spinal cord tumours is made, and the section also discusses tumours of the peripheral nerves. This section contains an excellent overview of NF-1 but perhaps much of this material could have been included in the phakomatoses section in Section 2. Attention could also have been brought to the particularly poor prognosis for malignant peripheral nerve sheath tumours arising in children with NF-1.

Section 4, which covers outcomes and complications, is perhaps the weakest section of the textbook. The inclusion of a chapter on chemosensitivity here looks a little out of place. However, the general principles of rehabilitation are well described as are general ethical principles. It perhaps reflects on the relative paucity of studies in this area that the chapter on the late effects of therapy takes up only 6 out of 560 pages of this book. However, this chapter might have included a more detailed description of the studies of the late effects, quality of life, and educational/employment outcome that were published in the early 1990s.

Overall, this is a comprehensive and very worthwhile textbook. The aims of the editors have been matched by the quality of the contributions. I would recommend this as a good reference book for doctors interested in the care of children with CNS tumours.

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