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BOOK REVIEW

Fundamentals of Burns Management

Kumar P, Paras Medical Publisher, Hyderabad, pages 166, 1998. Price Rs. 125/-

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Last two decades may not have seen a significant change in the overall management of burn patient, notwithstanding the advances in fluid resuscitation, nutrition and antibiotic therapy. Still there has been a significant consolidation of existing knowledge and a large number of products have been introduced for wound management.

Problem of burns in India is manifold. The magnitude of patients and shortage of trained personnel to deal with them necessitates a "short cut" approach to meet a larger target and too many such aspects has been addressed in this book. The compactness of the book and its easy readability also helps in achieving this goal. The chapters on first aid, pathophysiology and fluid resuscitation have been written quite comprehensively for a book of this nature, although, the reviewer is at a variance with the author on the issue of triage. Presentation with flow charts and tables allows easy reference. Similarly, the chapters on nutrition, sepsis and multiple organ failure are also quite remarkable. They provide sufficient information to the reader.

Writing a book requires a lot of effort, more so, if lots of information has to be provided in restricted number of pages. This approach can also have pitfalls that certain areas assume some pre-existing knowledge, which a reader of this work is unlikely to have. For example on page 15 the reader must have knowledge of the injury zones of Jackson to understand what the author has written about it. Still, the entire effort has been quite useful for the Indian scenario. The bibliography at the end of each chapter provides the reader with sufficient references and at places extensively covers the topic. While all the main topics are included as chapters, it comes as a surprise that a chapter on biological dressings and skin substitutes is missing.

The book will be really useful for many surgeons dealing with burns, who have had no access to formal training in this specialty. I also think, that it would be useful for nurses who are dedicated to burn management. While an initiate in Plastic Surgery may get along this book, he may need to refer to larger works for a more comprehensive understanding of the subject to master it. I will recommend the book to this target audience.

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