

Book Review

OBSTETRIC ANAESTHESIA

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Ist Edition (2004)

Arya Publications, Kala Amb, Distt. Sirmour (H.P.)

(Pages: 779, Price: Rs. 525/-)

This is the first edition of a reference book on obstetric anaesthesia. It represents the comprehensive review of the entire subject. The book has 779 pages, contained in 40 chapters, each contributed by the senior faculty of anaesthesiology in India. Some of the authors are very well versed with the art of writing and publications and hold key positions in top institutions of the country, having lot of publications in national / international journals. The authors by and large are top academicians and know how to convey difficult solutions in a simpler way. That has made the book versatile, being easily read and understood.

The book has covered various relevant aspects of obstetric anaesthesia ranging from physiology, pharmacology, clinical application, anaesthetic management and recent developments in the subject. Each chapter has been written meticulously and in a simplified way. The book is replenished with ample bibliography and wider range of sources.

Some of the chapters need a special mention. The chapter on physiology is well written and interesting to read. The key points given at the end of the chapter are a novel addition, as these serve the purpose of a quick revision. We wish, this should have been done in all the chapters. Credit should go to the authors of chapter on haemostatic disorders and haemoglobinopathies in pregnancy, a difficult topic indeed, which has been simplified to be understood without scratching the head.

Inclusion of the chapter on evidence based medicine is a brilliant idea of the editor, as such chapters are not found in books on obstetric anaesthesia. Chapter on anaesthesia for caesarean section is well written from practical point of view, especially the tables on techniques of anaesthesia are very informative. The chapters on coexisting medical diseases and high risk patients will go a long way to improve the care of such patients in the day to day practice.

The editor in the preface has mentioned that, the book is designed keeping in mind the varied readership to reach across all levels of training and sophistications in the field of obstetric anaesthesiology. Going through the book we feel that, this purpose has been well served beyond any doubt. The repetitions and overlappings of text and illustrations though left intentionally, not to disturb the originality of contributing authors, can be taken care of in the forthcoming editions, as it will trim the volume of the book as well. However, the editor has done a superb job of compiling the work of such a large number of authors.

In some of the chapters there are errors in the choice of words and spellings, the text is not properly composed to convey the correct message and some of the flow charts are not legible. The list of contributing authors has not been included. The illustration on the title page gives a wrong impression of the book being solely on spinal anaesthesia. The quality of paper, printing, illustrations and binding is average one. This is probably done to contain the price of the book. Being the first edition, such lacunae are likely to be there, which we assume will be taken care of in the forthcoming editions.

On the whole, the book is highly recommended to be used as reference book for obstetric anaesthesia. It is a must for postgraduate students, practicing anaesthesia clinicians and libraries. This book has given us much pleasure, as it will do to many readers. What readers will get out of it will vary and they may wish to select from pages accordingly. We are sure of its appeal to individual anaesthesiologist and will certainly make a useful addition for anaesthesia department libraries.

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