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'Energy Metabolism' by J Webber and I MacDonald, and then again on pp 138-141 ('Adult macronutrient requirements' by H P Bauer and J A Romijn). The index is comprehensive and well cross referenced, however, so it is easy to find the topic on which you want to read. The place to start is chapter 7, by S Allison, on 'Malnutrition in hospital patients, and assessment of nutritional support'. Allison makes the vital distinction between malnutrition, which is an inevitable consequence of terminal disease, and protein-calorie malnutrition, which is impairing and remediable component of the patient's illness. In the last case (but not the first) nutritional support may be very valuable. If the clinician who is a tyro as 'clinical nutrition' reads this chapter, and notes that some of his patients suffer from important and remediable malnutrition, then he should read the rest of the book, or else ensure that he can call on the services of a nutrition support team with the necessary expertise.

Inflammatory bowel disease in married couples

EDITOR.—We read with interest the article about inflammatory bowel disease in married couples by Comes et al ('Gut' 1994; 35: 1316-8). We have under our care a married couple who both developed Crohn's disease after marriage.

The female partner (now 32 years) presented in 1988, one year after her marriage, with abdominal pain andarthropathy and was found to have multiple small bowel strictures on a barium follow through. A duodenal biopsy confirmed Crohn's disease.

The male partner (now 48 years) was found to have sarcoidosis 24 years ago with a positive lup biopsy. He presented one year ago, five years after his marriage, with colitis


The product of two Canadian pathologists of considerable experience and standing in gastrointestinal pathology, this is an excellent synopsis of the subject. The text is organised in a standardised way, covering the whole of the alimentary tract. Although histology and the pathology of the gall bladder are included, but not liver or pancreas, under the headings 'Biology of Disease', 'Clinical Features', 'Cross Pathology', 'Microscopic Pathology', 'Special Diagnostic Techniques', and 'Differential diagnosis'. The result is an excellently succinct review of gastrointestinal pathology, useful for both clinical gastroenterologists and pathologists.

With the very comprehensive index and the clear style of the text, I am impressed with how easy it is to quickly find information that might be more difficult to locate elsewhere (for example, the distance of the landmarks in the oesophagus from the incisor teeth, or a brief biographical sketch about Harold Hazardsprung). There are important messages for clinical diagnosis and treatment. For example, with regard to tumours of the ampulla of Vater, the authors are quite right to state that 'superficial biopsies may reveal only an adenoma and not a more deeply located malignancy. The presence of jaundice favours a diagnosis of malignancy'.

The reference lists at the end of each section are short and references are not cited in the text. The emphasis is on some of the classic papers rather than the more recent advances. The topics covered by the book are arranged into site specific chapters, with the exception of one entitled on 'Diseases of Lymphoid Tissue', 'Stromal Lesions', and 'Neoplasms' and a further chapter entitled 'Diseases That May Affect Multiple Organs'. This includes graft v host disease, cosinophilic gastroenteritis, ischemia, vasculitis, Kaposi's sarcoma, etc. These are the least successful parts of the book. The section on lymphomas, particularly, is somewhat lacking in clarity.

Paradoxically, in a book, which calls itself an atlas, the weakest part is in the illustrations. Their small size and number and quality compare unfavourably with many extant standard textbooks with no preconceptions to be atavas. The choice of topics illustrated is sometimes questionable. For example, six figures illustrate acute appendicitis, a condition surely familiar to every reader, while adenocarcinoma of the appendix, an extremely rare condition, is not illustrated at all.

Despite the last criticism, this is a beautifully organised quick reference source, particularly suitable for clinical gastroenterologists and pathologists in training, as well as experienced gastroenterologists who wish to keep up to date. I strongly recommend this book. Its high price means that it is more for departments to buy than for individuals to own.

I C TALBOT


'It is intended that this volume may be read in its entirety or as individual chapters detailing specific subjects of interest to the healthcare professional, who is developing an interest in clinical nutrition, will use the textbook as a sole source of information...'. So says the preface to this well produced, 37 chapter, 60 author book. But do dietitians want or need this book? Can they not glean enough about nutritional support from the pages of Gut? Inspection of the index for the past three volumes of this journal suggests that they cannot. This book may be used as 'nutritional support', 'parenteral nutrition', 'enteral nutrition', and 'enteral feeding' indicate some abstracts, but very few main articles on how and why to use artificial nutritional support in humans, although the development of techniques for nutritional support has been one of the important therapeutic advances in the past two decades. Moreover this is not a field in which the untutored amateur does well: instead he is very likely to kill patients and waste substantial amounts of money.

I would not advise anyone developing an interest in clinical nutrition to read this book. A much more suitable text is 'Nutrition in Clinical Practice', by S Allison and J A Romijn, which is better written, more detailed, and more complete.

So why is this book necessary? Why would a dietitian or a research nurse want or need this book? The answer is, because of the high price of this book, and the nature of the book. This is a practical book. It covers the whole field of nutrition support, and covers it comprehensively. It is intended to be a resource book for all who work in this area, whether nurse, dietitian, or other. However it would not be a suitable book for students, for example. It is a practical book, aimed at the clinician, and not a background book, aimed at the researcher. It is an excellent book, and would be a valuable book to all who work in this field.
Inflammatory bowel disease in married couples.

K Singh, J H Saunders and R J Foley

Gut 1995 37: 158
doi: 10.1136/gut.37.1.158

Updated information and services can be found at:
http://gut.bmj.com/content/37/1/158.1.citation

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