

Book Review

I believe that every EP who works in the field - and not behind a desk - needs a good procedure book. Could I believe in read one - teach one? I think the answer to that is a definite maybe.

Some procedures, such as nerve blocks, do not need to be exact and are easily learned. Others like burr holes are not. Sometimes you have learnt a procedure and have forgotten the details as you haven't performed one in a while. We do not see many jaw dislocations in Tel HaShomer. Do you push anteriorly or posteriorly in treating this dislocation?

Sometimes you feel comfortable with a procedure and the next time it just does'nt go. You want a reference to help you find out what is going on - I have found this with CVP insertion. Sometimes, before you demonstrate a procedure, you want the resident to read up on it beforehand.

Consequently, it is clear you need a reference that is clear and concise - to the point. An encyclopedia such as Hedge's classic on this subject is not what the guy in the trenches needs. Barry Brenner of The University of Arkansas has written the kind of book that is needed. The fourth edition of Emergency Procedures and Techniques has been updated from the previous edition published ten years ago and it is most useful. New chapters on slit lamp use, the LMA and use of dermabond for lacerations are welcome. Ultrasound is not covered but Brenner's book is not the reference for this subject.

Still, some improvements could be made, in my opinion, although this might reflect Israeli practice. Absent are descriptions on femoral and shoulder nerve blocks, scapular manipulation and gastrostome insertion. Antiseptics still mention povidone iodine without mentioning the more effective chlorhexidine. Venous cutdowns, intracardiac injections, hemorrhoid incisions, z plasty, eyelid margin lacerations and the use of urologic sounds and followers are not often done in the emergency departments in this country and I think rarely too in the community setting in the USA.

Nevertheless this does not detract from the quality of the book. The easy to follow format is conserved and more axioms and important tips are highlighted. The size is convenient. This is not a reference that belongs on the shelf in the ED, it belongs in every practitioner's pocket.

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