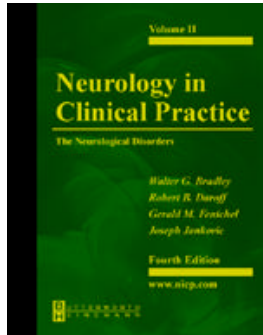


BOOK REVIEW



Neurology in Clinical Practice, 4th edition

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In this era of sweeping advances in clinical neurology and the associated neurosciences alike, an update to the acclaimed third edition of *Neurology in Clinical Practice*, published in 2000, was somewhat overdue. In its fourth incarnation, the authors have substantially revised and updated their textbook to incorporate the latest advances from the clinical and scientific fronts. The result is an extensive, yet elegantly written and comprehensive compendium of the principles and fundamentals of clinical neurology.

The book itself is divided into two sturdily bound volumes. The first covers the principles of diagnosis and management; the second examines the neurological disorders. Each chapter is covered in excellent breadth and depth and is penned by an internationally known expert in each particular field.

The first half of Volume One offers a brief yet complete synopsis of common neurological phenomena. The topics covered include loss of consciousness, intellectual and memory impairment, ataxias amongst others. The appeal of these sections is that they provide a structured approach to each of these common neurological conditions. Furthermore, they provide a detailed discussion describing the features that enable one to arrive at the appropriate diagnosis. Many chapters even include colourful historical anecdotes about the history of the disease or the individuals who first described it. The second half of Volume One examines neurological investigations and related clinical neurosciences. These chapters are comprehensive, but not excessively detailed. They cover topics such as neurophysiology, neuroimaging and neuropharmacology and therapeutics. Most of these chapters are further subdivided into key topics and include concise diagrams and tables to compliment the text. This feature is of particular benefit in the chapters describing the neurology of the special senses where the illustrations of the neural pathways help considerably in clarifying the concepts.

Volume Two focuses on disorders of the nervous system. The first five chapters address a large scope of problems including neurologic complications of systemic disease, trauma, vascular disease, tumours and infections. Despite the large spectrum of disease encompassed under these headings, each chapter succeeds in its goal of delivering a concise and complete summary of all the pertinent disorders. The remaining chapters in Volume Two focus on specific disorders such as encephalopathies, dementias, demyelinating diseases, movement disorders and disorders of peripheral nerves. These chapters are well organized and provide the reader with a thorough description of the pathophysiology and treatment of each specific disease or class of disorders. Volume Two concludes with three chapters addressing neurology in the newborn, pregnancy and the geriatric patient.

Despite its enormous number of contributors, *Neurology in Clinical Practice* manages to maintain a fairly consistent style of writing that makes the chapters enjoyable to read. Moreover, the book manages to avoid a common pitfall that entraps many 'bibles' of medicine; the authors cover a vast amount of material without appearing overly laconic and they succeed in addressing their subjects in appropriate detail. Furthermore, all chapters are copiously referenced from recent articles culled from the premiere neuroscience journals. The helpful illustrations and ample photographs also lend to the appeal of this text. Although the vast majority of these photographs are in black and white, many PET images to pathology slides, appear as colour plates. Although few in number, the colour plates are beautifully rendered on high quality glossy paper yielding excellent image quality that sacrifices neither detail nor resolution.

Overall, *Neurology in Clinical Practice* fourth edition is an excellent textbook that is a must-have for all neurologists and neurology residents. Although the text is geared at the senior resident or practicing physician, the majority of the chapters can still be of benefit to the medical student with an interest in neurology. The one major drawback is the exorbitant cost. At close to 700\$ it is beyond the means of most medical students or junior residents. However, given that you are getting over 2500 pages of updated information as well as online access, the cost seems very reasonable.

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