

Book Reviews

THE ADULT SPINE: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE. Volumes 1 & 2. 1991. First Edition. Edited by John W. Frymoyer, Thomas B. Drucker, Norton M. Hadler, John P. Kostiuik, James N. Weinstein and Thomas S. Whitecloud III. Published by Raven Press. 2422 pages. \$314 Cdn. approx.

This two-volume text is divided into seven sections with 104 chapters. There are 109 contributors from six different countries who represent the disciplines of engineering, radiology, physiotherapy, orthopedic surgery, neurology, neurosurgery, anesthesiology, rheumatology, basic science and chiropractic. With such a group of contributors from such diverse backgrounds, it is no wonder that this work represents the most comprehensive reference on the adult spine available today.

The book starts with a most engrossing chapter on the history of spinal disorders mentioning those figures who have been conspicuous or made major contributions to our knowledge of the structure and pathology of the spine. The remainder of the two volumes is divided into seven sections each dealing with a particular aspect of spinal disease. The cervical, thoracic and lumbar spines are dealt with in separate sections and in great detail.

When an editor has 109 contributors one has to expect variation in quality and style of the chapters. Nevertheless, the variation between chapters is minimal and most achieve a very high quality and depth of presentation.

Who will or should read this book? Anyone who cares for patients with back problems would find this volume text a valuable addition to their reference library.

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AMYOTROPHIC LATERAL SCLEROSIS AND OTHER MOTOR NEURON DISEASES. Advances in Neurology Series Volume 56. 1991. Edited by Lewis P. Rowland. Published by Raven Press, New York. 591 pages. \$149 Cdn. approx.

Dr. Lewis Rowland, Director of Neurological Services at the New York Neurological Institute, is a distinguished neurologist and academic who has given much of his energy and skill to understanding amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, one of the most serious of all human diseases. His editing of *Advances in Neurology*, volume 56 is his second editorship on this topic in the series, the former being volume 36 in 1982. The interval is sufficient to allow for significant advance, for example the identification of linkage of known markers to an ALS gene on chromosome 21 and to a spinal muscular atrophy gene on chromosome 5.

The book is very well organized focussing on cell biology, cellular pathology, genetics, epidemiology, environmental toxins, immunology, persistent viral infection and clinical trials. Many who are recognized as having made significant contributions to the understanding of ALS are among the authorship. The book is the outcome of a meeting in Tucson, Arizona in December, 1989; and was sponsored by the Muscular Dystrophy

Association of America. It should be noted that the attendance at the meeting in Tucson was much larger than the authorship. The discussions at the meeting, including the usual "corridor" conferences and other opportunities to discuss ALS have, no doubt, found their way into the various chapters.

In such a comprehensive publication it is difficult to select what may be the most significant contributions but I was especially impressed with the genetics section as this is the area where the greatest advance has been made. Special mention should be given to contributors such as Paul Jolicouer's elegant research on retrovirus-induced motor neuron disease and Ronald Oppenheim's interesting studies on the effect of proteins that rescue neurons from otherwise certain natural death. Genetically programmed neuronal death was discussed at the meeting and will, no doubt, be a major topic in the future. For those interested in state of the art culturing of neurons there are two nicely illustrated chapters.

Dr. Rowland is to be congratulated for a superb meeting out of which an important publication has evolved but also in undertaking the great task of gathering, organizing, and in his inimitable way, carefully editing the contributions from the various authors. It is a formidable task to which any who have undertaken this can attest. It is always difficult in publishing such work to have it up to date as the editors depend upon the authors and I was pleased to see some references in 1990 publications which is as recent as can be expected in such a work. For those, especially neurologists and graduate students, interested in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis it is an essential addition to their library. The design and paper are of high quality and there are many illustrations. The book is well indexed.

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NEUROLOGICAL COMPLICATIONS OF CANCER TREATMENT. 1990. Edited by David A. Rottenburg. Published by Butterworth - Heinemann. 228 pages. \$65 Cdn. approx.

As cancer treatment has become more effective at prolonging life, its side effects have become increasingly prevalent. While no organ system is immune from therapeutic toxicity, the nervous system with its limited capacity for cell division and regeneration is particularly susceptible to untoward effects of oncologic interventions. *Neurological Complications of Cancer Treatment* is an important and timely review of this topic.

The book is divided into four parts. Part 1, Complications of Radiation Therapy, includes six chapters devoted to specific syndromes associated with radiation therapy. Most of chapter 1 is devoted to delayed cerebral radiation necrosis. Chapter 2, Hydrocephalus and Dementia, carefully reviews CT and MRI correlates of disseminated necrotizing leukoencephalopathy, mineralizing microangiopathy and cerebral atrophy. Other chapters describe optic neuropathy, cranial neuropathy, myelopathy, and radiation induced tumors. Notably absent is a chapter on radiation