
Book Reviews

Paediatric Orthopaedics: A System of Decision-Making

Benjamin Joseph, Selvadurai Nayagam, Randall T Loder, Ian Torode

First edition, Hodder Arnold, London 2009

This is a very good book.

The necessities for successful surgical practice are summarised by the well-known aphorism "Choose well, cut well, get well." Orthopaedics is the most postgraduate of the surgical specialities, and of its subspecialities, Paediatric Orthopaedics has the greatest scope. The difficulty can be in 'seeing the wood for the trees'. This book is about choosing well – ie judgement, rather than technique, the latter being well covered by other texts and atlases. The authors have set out a problem-based framework for clinical decision-making.

The text is divided into eight sections: Deformities, Dislocations, Deficiencies, Discrepancies of limb length, Decreased joint mobility, Paralyses, Epiphyseal and physeal problems, and Infections. Each of these are split into chapters, with a total count of 72 (527 pages), making for comprehensive coverage of the subspeciality. Acute trauma is not covered; but there are chapters on septic arthritis, osteomyelitis and slipped upper femoral epiphysis.

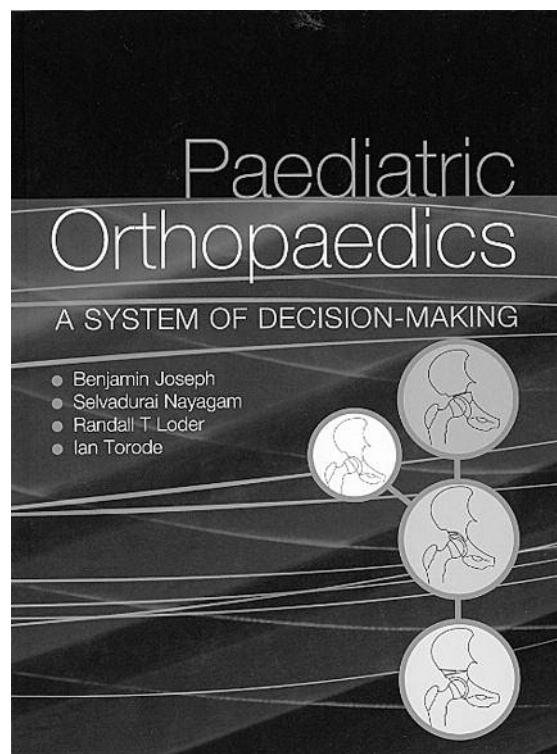
Being confined to just four authors, there is an admirable consistency of format and depth. The book is readable, well set-out, and has pertinent integrated illustrations. Appropriate references are given for each chapter. For the outline of management according to particular indications, there is an innovative table format which is logical, well-constructed and easy to use. 'Rationale of treatment suggested' is a heading for text that contains many 'pearls' – especially useful in paediatric surgery where the age, stage and development of both child and problem are so important. There are a few areas of contention (but these are either the areas of contention in our field or else matters of personal semantics).

The book is targeted at higher surgical trainees and younger consultants. I suspect it will have wider appeal. I certainly wish this book had been available during my higher surgical training – it is expensive (£99), and worth every penny.

Reviewed by Mr James S Huntley

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The Heritage of the Med-Chi

A collection of the portraits and medical artefacts in the possession of the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Aberdeen (founded 1789).

A Adam, JD Hutchison

Aberdeen Medico-Chirurgical Society

For all Aberdeen graduates and for many Scots the term *Med-Chi* is the Aberdeen Medico-Chirurgical Society which was founded in 1789. Medical historians will know the history of this society from the previous editions by Milne published to mark the bicentenary of this ancient society. The authors also acknowledge Riddell as they have used appropriate quotes from him from almost a century ago. This impressive volume is largely a pictorial record of many of the famous names of those Aberdonians leaving a lasting mark on society and in particular on the medical facets over these two centuries.

The collection of portraits is very impressive and, with the help of modern technology, they are outstandingly presented. The reproduction of the portraits is supplemented by a single page synopsis of men such as John McLeod, including his Nobel prize medal, and in others more space is given. Expanded space has been given to Sir Alexander Ogston who made outstanding contributions in the later part of the 19th century and there are interesting pictures of him in theatre practising the Lister antisepsis system in its early days. His developed spray is also illustrated. The aspect in which he is world renowned is a photo of the microscope from his department in which he established the staphylococci and their place in infection.

The latter part of the book illustrates the remarkable collection of memorabilia the society has accumulated over the decades and centuries. The interior of the society building is also illustrated and will bring back many memories to graduates from the Aberdeen medical school. It is also a pleasant reminder to those who have simply visited the current building that only a little of the extensive treasures that are retained are seen by any visitor. This book presents a large number of varied pieces as a collection for the first time. It makes fascinating light reading while recording many factual records along with the impressive illustrations.

The book is available by contacting the Secretary of the Royal Medico-Chirurgical society of Aberdeen rather than through the internet or booksellers. For further details please email medchi.admin@abdn.ac.uk.

Reviewed by Professor Dan G Young, University of Glasgow.

