**BOOK REVIEW**

Surgical reconstruction & rehabilitation in leprosy and other neuropathies

*Editors: Richard Schwarz and Wim Brandsma*

This multi-authored book is a valuable addition for updating our state of knowledge and practice for management of leprosy deformities and associated problems. The experience accumulated by health care professionals in treating these neuropathic limbs can now be used in treating similar problems associated with ‘other’ neuropathies, especially diabetes.

The editors, Richard Schwarz and Wim Brandsma, have made an effort to produce a textbook that provides a comprehensive yet easy, read, even for a beginner with no previous experience of leprosy rehabilitation. Each author, a specialist in their respective fields, has reported their experience of managing the multifaceted physical problems of neuropathies. The exhaustive references at the end of each chapter enable the reader to look for further details and ideas from the literature.

The chapters are well arranged, with an emphasis on problem solving oriented information. Every conceivable paralysis and other physical problem arising from neuropathies are addressed in detail. This makes the text book a useful reference manual for step-wise problem solving for individuals with paralysis of varying duration, complications and for mutilation of limbs.

Most authors have defined the scope of the chapters and given information for planning and executing the treatment modalities. However, the book does not provide a working guideline on how to select the most appropriate procedure for a given clinical situation from the many options available to the practitioner. A ‘decision making flow chart’, based on the author’s experience, would have been helpful for beginners and could be addressed in the next edition.

The chapters on neuropathic feet, beginning with the biomechanical assessment of the foot, are the most important new addition for a textbook on leprosy rehabilitation. Details on the principles and illustrations of the foot orthotics will help in providing these low-cost effective devices for neuropathic feet for leprosy and more widely for diabetes. Similarly, the chapter on the orthotics and prosthetics in neuropathy is instructive in orienting planning for management, taking into consideration the special requirements of people with neuropathies.

The greatest strengths of the book are the chapters on pre- and postoperative management, simplified assessment protocols in the appendix and advice on rehabilitation, derived from years of practical experience of the authors. It will be useful if protocols for assessment of results are included so that multicentric comparison becomes feasible.

This text book will serve to transfer the knowledge accumulated by specialists dealing with leprosy disabilities to the future practising professional who will be responsible for their care, as leprosy becomes integrated with the general health services. The book will be an asset in the teaching hospital libraries and institutions devoted to the care of leprosy afflicted.
persons and for the ever increasing diabetic population of the world. Improving care for the latter with the knowledge acquired from management of leprosy neuropathy will be the greatest contribution the authors and editors will have made for the future.

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