

Hildebrand and Brada have written a very pragmatic introduction to clinical neuro-oncology that is probably directed more at physicians who are not full-time neuro-oncologists. A suitable readership for this text would include medical and radiation oncologists, general neurologists and neurosurgeons, internists, and trainees in any of these specialties, including those who are currently in neuro-oncology fellowships. Because neuro-oncology is a multidisciplinary specialty, it is difficult for any one physician to be familiar with cancer, neurology and of course the highly specialized treatment modalities including many novel drugs that have neurologic side-effects. Moreover, because cancer patients are often very sick, and because neurologic symptoms and signs can evolve quite rapidly in the cancer patient, a simple and straightforward approach as illustrated in this book can be invaluable to the clinician faced with caring for these patients. Hildebrand and Brada present the most important aspects of their clinical discipline to their readers, and I believe succeed very well in so doing. Personally, I enjoyed reading this text, and learned from the very personal and practical approach offered by two prominent European neuro-oncologists. *Differential Diagnosis in Neuro-Oncology* is a suitable book for any neurologist, particularly those who are asked to provide opinions on cancer patients (and most general neurologists are included here), to own. I know that I will refer to this text for insightful guidance whenever I am confronted with a cancer patient who has developed perplexing neurologic symptoms and signs that have yet to be diagnosed.

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**THE TREATMENT OF EPILEPSY PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE, THIRD EDITION.** 2001. Edited by Elaine Wyllie. Published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. 1285 pages. C\$283.50 approx

This is the third edition of an exceedingly comprehensive book on the principals and practice in the treatment of epilepsy. Recent and striking developments in all phases of this complex disorder necessitated the update, which follows closely on the second edition in 1997 and the first edition 1993.

This manual is designed to serve as a guide and reference to adult and pediatric epileptologists, neurologists, neurosurgeons specifically as well as neurology and epilepsy fellows, residents, basic scientists and general physicians. This book reflects the forefronts in epilepsy treatment.

The editor has made a masterful effort in recruiting credible national and international authorities in the field of epilepsy.

The purpose of this endeavor will serve as a resource for those who care for children and adults with epilepsy or who are working towards the cure for this group of disorders.

This textbook has 91 well-written chapters. The importance of clinical epileptology occupies one third of the chapters devoted to epileptic seizures and syndromes. The book comprises six major parts: basic mechanisms of epileptogenesis, basic principals of electroencephalography, epileptic seizures and syndromes, anti-epileptic medications, epilepsy surgery, and psychological aspects of epilepsy.

The chapters are carefully written and referenced. Almost every aspect of epilepsy is covered. There are revisions to the chapters and new material has expanded the book by about one hundred pages from the second edition.

The updates are too numerous to mention all in detail. The notable and recent advances in the understanding of genetic epilepsy syndromes and molecular biology as well as chromosomal localization is well-presented

A number of new anti-epileptic medications have been introduced like gabapentin, lamotrigine, oxcarbazepine, topiramate, tiagabine, zonisamide and levetiracetam.

Vigabatrin and clobazam are not yet approved in US. In Canada oxcarbazepine, tiagabine, zonisamide and levetiracetam have yet to reach the market.

The revisions in the classification of epileptic seizures and epileptic syndromes are an ongoing process and invariably evoke passionate sentiments among the experts. Recent advances in neuroimaging and molecular biology are redefining the epileptic syndromes. The Commission on Classification and Terminology of the ILAE is revising the classification and an alternative classification has been proposed.

The leaps and bounds on neuroimaging in epilepsy diagnosis and management is mentioned repeatedly most notably in surgical management. Multiple subpial transections, deep brain stimulation and gamma knife are the new options. Other treatments are vagal nerve stimulation implants and ketogenic diet. There is a growing momentum to do epilepsy surgery earlier both in adults and children and there is a need for randomized clinical trials. While SPECT and MRI are the common diagnostic imaging techniques, PET is used in some centers only. MRS and fMRI are still largely used for research purposes.

Both genetic advances and imaging studies have heightened the need for new classification system for malformation of cortical development.

This is a complete text both for reference and treatment. It has managed to capture data, which is multiplying more rapidly than most of us can imagine. The result of this third edition will fulfill many of our needs till the next one.

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**TEXTURE OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM OF MAN AND THE VERTEBRATES, VOLUME II.** 2000. Edited by Pedro Pasik and Tauba Pasik. Published by SpringerWienNewYork. 667 pages. C\$220.50 approx.

Several questions come to mind on approaching this new edition of Ramon y Cajal's main book, his *Texture of the Nervous System of Man and the Vertebrates*. Why bother reading a book almost a century old? What can it possibly teach us? And is not a modern reprint of the 1911 French edition "*Histologie du système nerveux de l'homme et des vertébrés*" already available? Pasik and Pasik's edition is greatly superior to the reprint of the French edition. First, the quality of the figures is vastly improved, the result of using original drawings, many wearing the imprint of "Museo Cajal, Madrid". One becomes painfully aware of what has been missing before. Second, Pasik and Pasik notes to the text bring the information up to date, so the reader does not have to worry about wasting time learning discarded data. From this approach, Cajal's book is still one of the best – if not *the* best – detailed description of the morphology and connections of neurons. But beyond that, to read through Cajal's exposition of the neuron doctrine or the concept

of unidirectional transmission, based on histological preparations alone, is to witness the struggles of original ideas being born. Whoever has read Darwin's *The Origin of Species* or Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* knows the feeling. The book makes a wonderful gift to any neuroscientist, providing a sense of how we got t where we are now.

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**PSYCHIATRIC ISSUES IN EPILEPSY. A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT.** 2001. Edited by Alan B. Ettinger and Andres M. Kanner. Published by Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. 400 pages. C\$16400 .approx.

This multi-author, 26 chapter text discusses the complex relationships between epilepsy and associated psychiatric disorders. The authors address a number of issues that have received little attention in the neurologic literature on seizure disorders.

Psychiatric aspects of epilepsy have lagged behind studies of other aspects of seizure disorders, especially drug therapy.

Psychiatric issues are often only briefly discussed in reviews of epilepsy management despite the fact that psychiatric and psychologic disturbances often have an important impact on the quality of life of patients with epilepsy.

In this text, the psychiatric evaluation of patients with epilepsy, psychiatric disorders associated with epilepsy, the psychiatric consequences of epilepsy and antiepileptic drugs, drug interactions, psychiatric aspects of epilepsy surgery and quality of life issues are addressed. In a comprehensive manner, these issues are covered in a single textbook. A chapter is also dedicated to the psychiatric aspects of pediatric epilepsy.

I believe the authors have succeeded in consolidating, in a single volume, the current knowledge about the interaction between seizure disorders and psychiatric aspects. The text is easy to read and despite its multi-author contribution, the style of each chapter is similar.

This text would be of interest to any health professional involved in the care of patients with epilepsy.

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