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Books, Software, and Other Media

Pulmonary Hypertension. Nicholas S Hill and Harrison W Farber, editors. *Contemporary Cardiology* series. Christopher P Cannon, series editor. Annemarie Armani, executive editor. Totowa, New Jersey: Humana Press/Springer. 2008. Hard cover, 448 pages, illustrated, $149.

While the field of pulmonary hypertension has been expanding at a dizzying speed, with an ever-expanding number of papers, there has not been a single reference book where the expert or the novice in the field can go to get an in-depth discussion of the disease, from its history to pathobiology to the state of the art in evaluation and management. **Pulmonary Hypertension**, by Hill and Farber, does just that. While several evaluation and management guidelines have been published by professional societies, very few books have been dedicated to this topic that can serve as a reference book as well as a guide for health-care practitioners. Thus, this book fills a great need in this rapidly progressing discipline. It is a comprehensive yet succinct text that can be used not only by the pulmonary hypertension experts, but also by other health-care professionals who want to learn more about the disease.

At a little over 400 pages, this book is organized into 19 chapters that cover all aspects of pulmonary hypertension, including history, classification, evaluation, medical and surgical management, and future directions. While the reader without prior knowledge of pulmonary hypertension will get the most out of some chapters of this book, such as those addressing the disease classification and the general approach to evaluation and management, the pulmonary hypertension expert can also enjoy several in-depth discussions, such as the one on right-ventricular function.

Over 30 authors contributed to this book, and most of the authors or co-authors are experts in their fields. The book starts with a historical overview by Fishman, an expert who has experienced many of the discoveries first-hand. Fishman's opening chapter, along with the following 5 chapters, by Hargett and Tapson (classification), Oudiz (diagnosis), Farber (pathobiology), and Willers and Robbins (genetics), set the stage for the rest of the book. The only missing part here is a clear introduction to the different terms and abbreviations commonly used in the field, and often confusing some newcomers and pulmonary hypertension experts alike. This would have been a wise investment of space. The final chapter in this group, by Stone and Klinger, on the right ventricle, is a treatise on the topic and worthy of a detailed read.

This is followed by a series of chapters addressing specific disease entities and their association with pulmonary hypertension. Chapter 7, on congenital heart disease, by Lanzberg, is a must-read for anybody in the pulmonary hypertension field, as it demystifies this often very confusing area. Chapters on connective-tissue disease (by Fisher, Hill, and Farber), human immunodeficiency virus, liver disease, sarcoidosis, and sickle-cell disease (by Fisher and Klings), and chronic thromboembolic pulmonary hypertension (by Test, Auger, and Fedullo) are all excellent overviews of pulmonary hypertension associated with those conditions, although the thromboembolic chapter is a bit long. Notably missing, however, is a discussion of pulmonary hypertension in the setting of lung disease, including interstitial lung disease and emphysema. This is a very important emerging area of interest that would have been worthy of its own chapter.

The management chapters start with a general approach in Chapter 11 (by Hill and Klings), followed by chapters dedicated to each class of medication. The prostacyclin chapter by Hill, Vardas, and McLaughlin is a good overview, and so is the phosphodiesterase inhibitors chapter by Preston. They both give a good mix of theoretical and practical information, while the endothelin-blockade chapter by Langleben is heavier on the theoretical than the practical aspects of this therapy. Chapter 15 is a separate multi-authored chapter on statin therapy for pulmonary hypertension. It is not clear why a chapter needed to be devoted to this topic, but it is well written and detailed for those interested in this emerging area. Chapter 16 (by Hirschtritt, Steiner, and Hill) does a good job in covering transitions and combination therapy, and Chapter 18, by Trulock, covers surgical therapies, including lung transplantation and atrial septostomy. Chapter 17, on acute right-ventricular dysfunction (by Vieillard-Baron and Jardin), may seem a bit out of place, but is well written and complements Chapter 6, on right-ventricular function, with some but minimal overlap. The closing chapter, on new directions in pulmonary hypertension therapy (by Carlin and Peacock), gives the reader an excellent overview of this very exciting area.

A first rate selection of figures are provided in one area as color plates, but their resolution could have been better. Overall, I found this textbook to be very useful, well written, and accurate. The only major limitation I see is the absence of a chapter dedicated to pulmonary hypertension in the setting of lung disease. All other issues are relatively minor and do not take away from this excellent and timely textbook that covers the important emerging field of pulmonary hypertension.

I highly recommend **Pulmonary Hypertension** to all health-care professionals involved in the care of patients with this disease. It is an easy and informative read, but it is also well organized for use as a reference. I will keep my copy within a close reach from my desk.

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Pediatric Respiratory Medicine, 2nd edition. Lynn F Taussig MD, Louis I Landau MD editors. Philadelphia: Mosby Elsevier. 2008, Hard cover, illustrated, 1,152 pages, $149.

Move over, Kendig—weighing in at 6 lbs 10 oz is the second edition of Taussig and Landau's **Pediatric Respiratory Medicine**. The team of authors is a distinguished international panel of experts in pediatric pulmonary diseases. The text is detailed, up to date, and comprehensive. The writing style is consistent. The focus is on understanding the disease process, rather than serving as a cookbook type guide to therapy.

The opening chapter, on origins and economic impact of respiratory disease, is a nicely written overview of where we are in