Book Review


This book is a welcome addition to the current material available for the practitioner who treats patients with vestibular and balance disorders. It follows a familiar format but contains some content not covered in other texts. The book begins with two very well constructed chapters on the relevant anatomy and physiology of the vestibular system. The discussion of vestibular signal processing, central vestibular pathways, and the interaction of proprioceptive and vestibular reflexes is particularly helpful. Both chapters are a bit short on good illustrations but the content overcomes this shortfall. A somewhat unique chapter on the epidemiology of dizziness follows, giving insight into the limitations of our knowledge in this area. The following chapter on the differential diagnosis of vertigo is very concise and rich with "clinical pearls" and the review chapter on clinical testing uses an engineering systems analysis approach to explain the underpinnings of currently available objective tests.

The remainder of the text includes some excellent chapters discussing the more commonly encountered diagnoses. Particularly well done are the chapters on endolymphatic hydrops and its imaging, unilateral vestibular loss, and superior canal dehiscence. The chapter on benign paroxysmal positional vertigo has superb illustrations to help understand this disorder, and the chapter on migraine associated vertigo includes an excellent review and chart on pharmacological treatment. The highlight of the book for our readership is a chapter that stands out in completeness and important information is Cassibrant’s chapter on balance disorders in children. The differences in the differential diagnosis between adults and children are carefully covered, and considerations in testing and management in this population are thoughtfully reviewed. Particularly welcome is the material on benign paroxysmal vertigo of childhood which is vital for the pediatric practitioner to recognize.

Although the chapter on vertebrobasilar insufficiency is lacking in discussion of surgical intervention and the chapter on drug-induced vertigo would greatly benefit from good tables, these are minor issues. I would highly recommend this text to clinicians who seek a deeper understanding of balance disorders and would like a concise but complete review of the topic.

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