

Book Review

Surgical reconstruction and rehabilitation in leprosy and other neuropathies

Richard Schwartz, Wim Brandsma
Ekta Books Kathmandu Nepal 2004
ISBN 99933-1-371-8

This book dedicated to Paul Brand (1914-2003) and with a foreword by Dr EF Fritschi and Dr. Dinkar Palande is a very useful addition to the books on the subject. The book is multi authored and edited ably by a surgeon Dr. Richard Schwartz and a Physical Therapist Dr. Wim Brandsma Ph.D. Both have great credentials in Leprosy work and have a lot of hands on experience. Indeed when true professionals who have devoted a lot of their professional lives to a particular field decide to write about it the result is usually quite striking. This book epitomises this labour of love of two dedicated professionals and rightly emphasises both 'Surgical Reconstruction' and 'Rehabilitation'.

The book starts with a chapter on 'General Principles' and

then goes on to examination and anatomy of peripheral nerves, followed by a detailed elucidation on each individual nerve. I was a little disappointed that Dr. PV Joshi's work on measured tension in 4 tailed transfers did not find mention in the otherwise excellent chapter on 'Ulnar Nerve Palsy'. There are chapters on 'Mitten Hand' and 'Neuropathic Feet' and the list of contributors reads very well with many distinguished persons amongst them. The chapters on ulcer management and orthotics are nice because these issues are often glossed over in other books with inadequate attention to detail. Pre and Post operative therapy for tendon transfers is also an area which is of great value to the reader especially if he or she is not ably complimented by rehabilitation services---a sad but true state of affairs for many of our colleagues in India and many other parts of the world. Finally the chapter on unfavourable results is invaluable in that it shows the way out for many a young (and sometimes not so young) surgeon in case of failure.

All in all this book is a must read for all surgeons interested in reconstructive surgery of leprosy and other neuropathies. It will be a great addition to all medical college libraries. The editors and authors are to be congratulated for bringing out this excellent volume.

M. R. Thatte

Consultant Hand and Plastic Surgeon
Bombay Hospital, Mumbai, India