



Book Review

PEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGY AND INBORN ERRORS OF METABOLISM, edited by K Sarafoglou; 2009. New York: McGraw Hill. pp. 949. Price: A\$160.

As the title suggests, this multi-author clinical text book covers the diagnosis and management of both endocrine and metabolic disorders of children. It is unique among current texts in this breadth of subject area and reflects the background and skills of the chief editor, Kyriakie Sarafoglou, who is an Assistant Professor of Paediatric Endocrinology, Inborn Errors or Metabolism, and Human Genetics. From a practical point of view, this is a useful combination as, for example, most of the major causes of a common and important presenting clinical sign such as hypoglycaemia are contained within the one volume.

This is a good textbook. It is obvious that the editors and publishers have thought about what the purpose of the book is, how best to achieve this, and how to avoid problems common to multi-author text books. The stated aim is to provide a 'comprehensive, clinically focussed medical reference to specialists' while also addressing the 'fundamental concepts of the two inter-related disciplines'. To achieve this, the authors followed the underlying precept of 'explanation not simplification', which has resulted in a concise writing style throughout the book that first addresses aetiology and pathophysiology before moving to presentation, diagnosis, and management. Each disease-based chapter is set out in this common format, which also includes an 'At-a-Glance' page providing a quick overview of the disease, its aetiology, a list of forms of the disease and common clinical findings. This reviewer particularly liked the idea of a review of the pathophysiology prior to addressing the clinical aspects of the disease.

In addition to chapters devoted to specific diseases, the first three chapters provide general information in regards to

emergency assessment and management of metabolic and endocrine disorders, newborn screening, and molecular genetic testing. Similarly, the final three chapters are also devoted to diagnostic methodologies being concerned with laboratory-based investigations of metabolic and endocrine disorders and diagnostic imaging.

The subject areas are very well covered and the information provided in all chapters appears to be up to date. Emerging problems such as childhood obesity and type 2 diabetes are given due recognition. The use of tables, diagrams, and colour photographs are well utilised to explain and summarise. Usually both American units (e.g. mg/dL or mEq) and those used in Australia (e.g. mmol/L) are given, although there are instances throughout the book where only the American version is given. This was the only real inconsistency noted between or within chapters.

This is a very well-written and set out text book that will be a useful reference to paediatric endocrinology students, general paediatricians, and medical undergraduates. It will be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of paediatric endocrinology departments and medical libraries while not being so expensive (\$160), in comparison to similar texts, as to be out of reach of the individual.

Dr Ian Hughes
OzGrow Research Fellow
Children's Nutrition Research Centre
School of Medicine
University of Queensland
Queensland
Australia