

time to time to look up facts about conditions and exposures that I am not very familiar with. It is a useful resource for both service and research occupational health departments. Despite the expense, now is probably the time to update your old edition of Hunter.

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### **Prevention of Respiratory Diseases.**

Edited by A HIRSCH, M GOLDBERG, JP MARTIN, R MASSE. (Pp 744; price \$US185.) 1993. New York: Marcel Dekkar. ISBN 0-8247-8850-8. (Vol 68 in Series Lung Biology in Health and Disease, Ed: CLAUDE LENFANT.)

This volume in the series "Lung Biology in Health and Disease" is intended to stand alone, as are the others in the series. The intended audience is presumably respiratory physicians and others with an interest in respiratory medicine and physiology. The intention is admirable: many respiratory diseases are preventable and therefore a book about prevention should be important and interesting. But the title should rather have been "Preventable Respiratory Diseases" as much of the volume is only indirectly about prevention. Rather it covers pathogenesis of the respiratory diseases, where external factors play an important part, and their epidemiology and toxicology.

There are four sections: occupational respiratory diseases, environmental factors in respiratory diseases, biological markers, and tobacco and respiratory diseases. There is considerable variation in style and quality between sections and between individual chapters. The occupational diseases section does not include the classical occupational lung diseases such as silicosis and coal-workers' pneumoconiosis but rather concentrates on the occupational contribution to diseases that can also occur without the occupational exposure. The section includes particularly good chapters on pleural cancer and occupational factors in lung cancer. They provide an authoritative summary of the current knowledge and point to where further work is needed. The section on environmental factors I found rather disappointing. Here there is considerable overlap between the chapters and sometimes they almost contradict one another. There is only a relatively short

piece on prevention strategies, such as those to reduce environmental pollution. The section on biological markers is interesting and makes a good introduction to this important subject but the role of this area in prevention is not made very clear.

The best section for me was the one about tobacco and respiratory diseases. There are useful reviews of the evidence about the effects of smoking and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. And in this section there really is discussion about prevention, with good reviews on strategies to stop smoking and about antitobacco policies. It is not entirely clear to me why this section covers prevention strategies better than do the sections on occupational and environmental respiratory diseases. Perhaps it is because physicians play a part in stopping smoking and in smoking control programmes, whereas prevention for the occupational and environmental respiratory diseases relies on other professionals such as hygienists, engineers, and politicians once the epidemiology is understood. A chapter on engineering controls and methods of exhaust ventilation, etc, would have been appropriate in this volume but perhaps it was thought not to be of interest to most of the readers.

This book will be of particular interest to anyone wanting to know about tobacco related diseases and tobacco control. It is probably of more interest to respiratory physicians than to most occupational physicians. Those studying for the Associate of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine or for qualifications in occupational hygiene and safety may find some parts of it useful if they can consult it in their local library.

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### **Practical Occupational Medicine.**

By A SEATON, R AGIUS, E MCCLOY, D D'AURIA. (Pp 277; price £24.95.) 1994. London: Edward Arnold. ISBN 0-340-55936-5.

At under £25, this small paperback book on occupational medicine is certainly value for money. The authors include academics and practising occupational physicians, who are well qualified to write a book on practical occupational medicine. As the title suggests, the emphasis of the book is on practical aspects. This is well illustrated by the ample case histories scattered throughout the

book. The cases are brief, succinct, and include a variety of problems that could well be encountered by clinicians in a busy occupational medicine practice. The appendices include tables on reportable diseases, prescribed diseases, and occupational exposure standards. Vibration white finger should have been mentioned as an example of a prescribed disease attracting industrial injuries benefit. The examples of chemicals with occupational exposure limits seem to have been carefully selected to represent different classes of compounds, and the authors also indicate that these standards are updated annually. Readers would therefore need to refer to the latest version of EH40 for the current United Kingdom occupational exposure standards.

The chapters in the book cover major areas of practical importance especially in clinical occupational medicine. And these chapters are presented in logical order. The first chapter on the occupational history is most appropriate. Other chapters deal with recognising, investigating, managing, and preventing occupational diseases. A section on occupational hygiene is in the chapter on prevention. This has clear photographs of occupational hygiene instruments, different respirators, and an exhaust ventilation system for a stonemason's yard. The whole book contains many photographs and good tables, charts, and diagrams that make reading easy and enjoyable. The section on worker selection in prevention is thought provoking. Should worker selection by pre-employment assessment be restricted to those jobs where adequate control of exposure is not reasonably achievable? The authors rightly put the emphasis on prevention by making the workplace safe rather than pre-employment selection of the superfit. My feeling is that this second option is still being practised. One would hope that it is not done by those who have been trained in occupational medicine or those who have been convinced by the contents of this book.

The book is suitable for those doing the Associate of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine exam, especially the slides section and the orals. It would also be ideal for doctors preparing for the new Diploma in Occupational Medicine. I would recommend it for all doctors who profess to be interested in practical occupational medicine.

T C AW