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Hazard Control in the Work Place.
3 October 1995. The Royal College of Medicine, Wimpole Street, London.

The Royal College of Medicine is an appropriate venue for this prestigious conference, the first of its kind to be held in the United Kingdom.

It will provide essential information for everyone concerned with occupational health and safety and is a unique opportunity to obtain up to date knowledge and insights from internationally renowned experts in their field. The day will cover all aspects of hazard identification, standards and control, and the role of the Health and Safety Executive.

Conference topics include occupational exposure limits, the control of hazards, particularly chemical hazards, risk assessment and the role of the Advisory Committee on Toxic Substances (ACTS). The conference will also provide a forum for delegates to share experiences and discuss topical issues.

The conference will be chaired by Professor Malcolm Harrington, Director of the Institute of Occupational Health, Birmingham University. Speakers include Dr L S Levy, Senior Lecturer, Institute of Occupational Health, Birmingham University, Occupational Health Consultant Mr F Gill, Dr H Rafaat, of the Health and Safety Unit, Aston University, and Dr Linda Derrick, Regional Director for London, South East, and Home Counties Regions Field Operations, a division of the Health and Safety Executive.

This conference is being organised by Suffolk Educational and Training Services, part of Suffolk College, where a thriving Group Occupational Health Service has been based for some years.

A brochure with full details can be obtained from conference administrator Jan Wain at SETS Ltd, Suffolk College, Rope Walk, Ipswich IP4 1LT. Telephone (01473) 296633 Fax (01473) 216416.

For further information please contact Audrey Semple, SETS Ltd, Suffolk College, Rope Walk, Ipswich IP4 1LT. Telephone (01473) 296518; fax (01473) 216416.

BOOK REVIEWS

Book review editor: R L Maynard

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(The price and availability are occasionally subject to revision by the Publishers.)

Trends in Cancer Incidence and Mortality. Edited by M P COLEMAN, J ESTEVE, P DAMIECKI, A ARSLAN, H RENARD (Pp 806 + viii; price £120). 1993. Lyon, France: International Agency for Research on Cancer. ISBN 92 832 2121 4.

This book represents a departure from the previous IARC publications in that most of the data are presented in graphical rather than tabular form. Detailed tables are presented in a companion volume, but here one finds an encyclopaedic compilation of material on cancer incidence from the six previous IARC volumes of *Cancer Incidence in Five Continents* along with national cancer mortality data taken from the WHO publications. Cancer incidence data cover the period 1950–1987 and mortality data are available from 1955 to 1988. Incidence data are provided from 60 registries in 29 countries and 36 national mortality data sets are used. Such a broad coverage makes the book daunting for the non-specialist, but the graphical layout makes it easy to find things, and is particularly useful for developing and preliminary testing of hypotheses about possible causes of cancer. Even in this context, however, it will need to be used in conjunction with the more detailed tabulations published in other IARC volumes. One weakness is the unavoidable delay in compiling international data, so that information on trends is already eight years out of date. Another concern is the choice of rates to plot. The truncated rate and cumulative risk have very similarly shaped curves, the only difference being changes in the age structure of populations. It would have been useful to look at time trends more fully for younger and older age groups, especially for early onset cancers, such as Hodgkin's disease and testicular cancer. The one acknowledged weakness of this is a final chapter on childhood cancers in which trends in cumulative risk for ages 0–14 years for leukaemia and all cancers are given.

The book is organised by chapters on each specific cancer site and they follow a standard pattern. Each chapter has some explanatory text that describes patterns separately for Europe, Asia and Oceania, and

the Americas, but most of the space is filled with graphs. Trends in incidence for the truncated rates (30–74 years) and the cumulative risk from ages 30–74 years are given for each country for men and women separately for most sites. The best fitting age-period-cohort polynomial model is given for each country and graph. Separate graphs then give the percentage change per 5-year period for age bands 30–44, 45–64, 65–74 and the total age group 30–74. This process is then repeated for the mortality data.

This is very much a reference book for specialists. The availability of graphical data is useful and saves time when making lots of comparisons. Its value to the more casual reader is likely to be limited, however, and the sheer mass of material will put off the uninitiated.

JACK CUZICK

Textbook of Clinical Occupational and Environmental Medicine. Edited by L ROSENSTOCK, MR CULLEN (Pp 909, price £96). 1994. Philadelphia: WB Saunders. ISBN 0 7216 3482 6.

Environmental medicine is now a distinct medical discipline in North America and is seen as complementary to occupational medicine. Unfortunately, in the United Kingdom there is still much debate over the definition, scope and even "ownership" of the subject so that this American book may be a very useful contribution to the development of environmental medicine in this country as it shows the closeness of the subject to occupational medicine.

The book is ambitiously aimed at the needs of students, clinicians in training, and established clinicians who "seek a resource to integrate occupational and environmental medicine into routine clinical practice". In this it does succeed, by presenting a seamless transition from the practice of clinical occupational medicine in the workplace to the application of the same and similar principles to the health effects of physical, chemical, and biological factors in the general environment.

The first section on principles and practice compares and contrasts the knowledge base and the fundamental skills central to good clinical practice. A chapter on communication of risk is especially welcome as this skill is so frequently lacking in commentators on environmental issues. It was also particularly pleasing to see the role of specific susceptibility, as a factor in risk assessment, fully considered. The chapter that deals with legal and regulatory matters is understandably devoted to American legislation, bearing in mind the origins of the book, and so has little relevance to the British reader.

The next section describes the core disciplines of toxicology, epidemiology, and industrial hygiene. As introductions to these topics, the chapters constitute good succinct reviews and should stimulate the interested reader to refer to other dedicated texts. The paucity of references in these chapters was a little disappointing and indeed, this is a criticism of the book in general. Few references are given in the bibliographies at the end of each chapter so that the stimulated reader may be somewhat frustrated.

Section three considers clinical evaluation and treatment and is presented systematically by organ, apart from the last chapter which is on cancer. Each of the chapters is comprehensive and systematic. The coverage of each subject ranges from basic principles to quite advanced topics and although this will satisfy the needs of readers that include the trainee and the experienced clinician, there is a danger of overload for the student.

The final section, which deals with specific hazards in the workplace and the environment, is a bit of a hotch-potch of subjects. It was, however, useful that the issues covered included the problems of low level environmental exposures, psychophysiological stress, and the organisation of work. "The chapter on metals and related compounds does resemble a shopping list but the necessary information is there in a very readable form. The hazards of exposure to indoor air are well described.

Overall, this is an excellent textbook for the practising occupational physician and clinicians wishing to become more familiar with the subject of environmental medicine, as well as occupational medicine, and certainly as practised in North America. The book is accurate in detail and seems to be as up to date as any textbook can be. The main competitors are also from North America but this book is more comprehensive. Unfortunately, it is not appropriate for the legal aspects of occupational medicine in the United Kingdom. The book would be valuable to candidates for membership of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine, as a reference text for students and as an update for experienced clinicians. It is not too expensive and I would recommend physicians practising in clinical occupational medicine to seriously consider buying their own copy. My hope is that the book stimu-

lates further development of environmental medicine in this country, but alongside occupational medicine.

P G BLAIN

Wilderness Medicine: Management of Wilderness and Environmental Emergencies. Edited by PAUL S AUERBACH. (Pp 1506; price £121) 1995. St Louis, Missouri: Mosby. ISBN 0-8016-7044-6.

This book, as the title indicates, is about how nature, specifically sun, sea, terrain, weather, animals and plants, can harm homo sapiens. No space has been spared by the 93 contributors to give a diverse volume ranging from, as stated in the preface, "first hand observation of grizzly bear behaviour in the wild to laboratory elucidation of the fundamental molecular changes associated with heatstroke". Fifty six chapters range from high altitude medicine to scuba diving and dysbarism, illnesses related to extremes of temperature including thermoregulation and protective clothing, survival and medical problems in tropical jungles and deserts to wastelands and deserts of higher latitudes and to the areas around both Poles. The dangers to man posed by fish, reptiles, arthropods and mammals are extensively covered with up to date lines of management and limited resources when struck down by these. The contrast of the sophisticated traveller in the wilderness when things go wrong is highlighted in a chapter on medical liability and another on ethics gives some useful hints on the rights and wrongs of life and death decisions in unusual places and difficult circumstances.

The Editor included physicians, paramedical personnel, and medical students to contribute to wilderness medicine. This

book need not be restricted to these groups as there is a vast amount of geographical, ecological, and climatological information not to mention survival, transport, hygiene, search and rescue, and even natural disaster management. Its aim is not easy to define although it gives a more than thorough grounding on how to deal with emergencies in men, women, and children who become ill by trauma or acquired causes (often area specific) in isolated parts of the world where medical facilities are not available. There are over seven and a half thousand references and several recommended reading lists. It will be especially valuable to expedition medical officers although at just over 4 kg it is unlikely to be welcomed in a backpack nor on the other hand will it be easily lost. Although the book lends itself well to specific chapter selection, there can only be a few who would read the 1500 pages in sequence.

At £121 it is good value, beautifully bound and illustrated with a pleasing typeset. There is immaculate spelling accuracy albeit North American. Had editorial privilege been exercised with the statutory 30% trim on the number of words, the content need not have diminished and repetition between chapters could have been reduced. Some statements are a little bewildering. An example still puzzles me: "in no other conceptual area of medicine is there such an obvious integration of wellness with disease and surgical illness". These would have been better recast or left out altogether.

Nevertheless Auerbach has upgraded his previous edition and provides an important textbook that embraces introductory science and medical techniques. In this book there is something for everyone in an itinerant readership who by self selection venture to faraway places.

IAIN LEVACK