BOOK REVIEWS

Infections in Emergency Medicine Volume 2

Edited by D. SCHILLINGER & A. HARWOOD-NUSS

Churchill Livingstone, New York, 1989, £37.00

Infections and infectious diseases are commonly seen in the A&E department but there is no book which deals with this subject from an A&E viewpoint. This text in two volumes aims to fill this gap and provide a comprehensive coverage of infections suitable for clinicians and academics alike.

Volume 1 covers infectious disease of various systems and the immunocompromised patient. Volume 2 completes the picture by providing comprehensive accounts of infections of bones and joints, skin and soft tissue and septic shock. There are two chapters on genitourinary infections, one for each sex. This results in some repetition, particularly with herpes and syphilis and the opportunity to compare the different presentation of genitourinary infections in men and women is lost. The abundance of tables to summarize information compensates for this but I was surprised that human immunodeficiency virus was not mentioned in either chapter. The chapter on gastrointestinal infections is mainly concerned with different types of diarrhoea but also contains an important section on hepatitis. This is followed by a fascinating section on systemic infections transmitted by bites and animal contact in the chapter on infections from animal sources. The range of infections covered is impressive with details of everything from bubonic plague to rocky mountain spotted fever.

The chapters are structured to deal in turn with aetiology, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, differential diagnosis and immediate management of the infection. If appropriate, consideration is given to admission, transfer and consultation guidelines and preventative measures. There is some transatlantic bias in the book but this is manifest as different emphasis on subjects and management rather than clinically important differences. Some details of inpatient management are given to help with immediate decision making. The sections are long, do not have frequent subheadings and only rarely a summary. This severely limits the use of these volumes for quick reference in the A&E department. However, the volumes are comprehensively referenced and may be useful for wider reading around a subject or as a source for unusual diseases.

Dr M. P. SHELLEY

Consultant in Anaesthesia and Intensive Care
University Hospital of South Manchester
Withington, Manchester