

also well presented. The list of diagnostic tests includes unusual investigations like thermography and capillaroscopy, while air plethysmography receives less than usual attention.

Because Europeans wrote the book, some of the treatment modalities are unfamiliar to readers in the United States. A whole chapter is devoted to phlebotropic drugs, not approved in this country by the Food and Drug Administration. Some of the terminology is unfamiliar to surgeons in the United States. *Crookectomy*, for instance, means high ligation of the lesser saphenous vein; the *Mercier classification* is used to describe variation of the termination of the lesser saphenous vein. *Short*, of course, means lesser, and *long* means greater, as far as the saphenous veins are concerned.

Treatment is focused on outpatient management of spider veins and primary varicosity, and you can learn a lot from this book on sclerotherapy and hook phlebectomy. Conventional stripping is well described, and unusual surgical techniques, such as the Mayo external stripper, no longer used at the Mayo Clinic for this purpose, are also presented. While so up-to-date in the management of chronic venous insufficiency including venous ulcer treatment, or even subfascial endoscopic perforator vein surgery (SEPS), it was surprising to find that the authors do not recommend catheter-directed thrombolysis for the treatment of acute deep vein thrombosis and that endovascular recanalization, angioplasty, or stenting was not mentioned as a treatment alternative. If you are interested in minimally invasive or open surgical techniques for acute or chronic deep venous occlusions, this book will not fulfill your expectations.

Overall, this is still a practical and easy-to-use guide on the management of superficial venous disease of the lower limbs. I recommend it to vascular surgeons, internists, cardiologists, and dermatologists who treat patients with venous disorders.

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#### Advances in surgery, vol 34

John Cameron, Charles Balch, Bernard Langer, John Mannick, George Sheldon, G. Tom Shires, Ronald Tompkins, John Wong; St Louis; 2000; Mosby; 429 pages.

*Advances in Surgery*, edited by Cameron et al, for those unfamiliar with the series, is an annual compilation of approximately 20 chapters focusing on specific surgical problems reviewed by leading experts in each area. As such, each volume is not expected to provide a comprehensive examination of surgical topics, but to focus on a specific aspect of surgical practice that can be reviewed succinctly in 10 to 30 pages of text.

Of interest, this year's addition is heavily weighted toward oncology, with 11 of 18 chapters focusing on the management of various neoplastic processes. A review of the previous years' editions reveals that this focus is not consistent, with a more rounded representation of other areas of surgery in most years. Two chapters in this edition address areas of vascular surgery: a general

review of the basics of endovascular aneurysm repair and a provocative chapter examining the functional outcome of patients after distal bypass procedures.

Like most books of this type, the chapters vary in terms of style and content, and the usefulness of the series itself depends on the needs of the reader. Some chapters are written to aid the clinician in the most up-to-date management of a clinical problem. This would include excellent reviews of the management of in situ breast carcinoma and the indications for splenic preservation after blunt and penetrating trauma. Sections are included summarizing the authors' own protocols of treatment, which should be of great benefit to the practicing surgeon. Other chapters include more technical information, with chapters describing in detail the technique of laparoscopic-assisted colon resection and blunt esophagectomy. Also, there is an excellent review article that discusses the role of tamoxifen in the prevention and treatment of breast cancer.

Most of the chapters are written well, with defined objectives and clearly presented data allowing the reader to gain maximum benefit in a minimal amount of time. The intent in most cases is not an in-depth review similar to a surgical textbook, but a presentation of current issues shaping practice.

As such, the question arises concerning who will benefit most from this series. Clearly, those reviewing for the general surgery qualifying examination, the recertification examination, and in particular the oral boards will find these chapters very useful. Residents in training will also benefit from a current review of specific problems that is more timely than most textbooks, and over the course of several years, most of the topics on the oral boards will likely be discussed in the series. For practicing general or general/vascular surgeons who need to remain current on diverse areas of surgery, the practical bent of most chapters will be appreciated. For those who wish to delve further into the literature concerning a topic, extensive references are provided in most chapters.

However, for vascular surgeons who perform 100% vascular surgery, there is little to recommend, other than the opportunity to remain current on the latest trends in their general surgery colleagues' practice. Although the two chapters concerning vascular surgical subjects are interesting, the reader who desires a focus on vascular surgery issues should consider the corresponding series, *Advances in Vascular Surgery* edited by Whittemore et al.

Overall, this series of books succeeds as a succinct mechanism of review on the management of important problems in a variety of general surgery topics. Obviously it is not a comprehensive review, but the reviews are much more timely than most textbooks, and as such can be more useful to the practicing surgeon. In this particular issue, the main focus is on topics in oncology, and those interested in an update on these issues should strongly consider it for their library.

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