



BOOK REVIEW

Facial clefts and craniosynostosis: Principles and management

Turvey TA, Vig KWL and Fonseca RJ. W.B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia. Pages 782, 1996. ISBN 0-7216-3783-3.

A comprehensive, authoritative book on craniofacial anomalies has been a long felt necessity of all those who have been interested in this field. The fact that we in India come across quite a few of these anomalies and the lack of a standard reference text, was what kindled my interest in this book.

The book consists of four sections: Causes and Consequence, Diagnosis and Treatment planning, Surgical management and Outcome assessment, with a total of thirty chapters.

Among the many authors who have contributed to this book, the most illustrious is Dr. Paul Tessier acknowledged by most as the creator of the subspeciality of craniofacial surgery. He has contributed to two chapters - 'Facial Clefting Disorders and Craniofacial Synostes - Skeletal Considerations' which is full of illustrations and the chapter on 'Management of Mandibulofacial Dysostosis'.

The chapter 17 on 'Primary closure of Cleft Lip and Palate' is by a single author (Frank E. Abyholm of the Oslo Cleft Centre), who advocates Millard's technique for lip closure, with some modifications in bilateral complete clefts and cleft palate repair based on von Langenbeck's principles with a few changes incorporated.

The last section is on 'Outcome assessment' - which is divided into two chapters - 'A methodologic approach to outcome assessment' and 'Evaluating treatment alternatives; Measurement and Design'. I feel that both these chapters are of utmost importance in this age of doctors being held responsible for the kind of care they provide, under the consumer protection act, as well as the tendency of a few doctors to prematurely trumpet their own 'superiority', for personal publicity. The fact that the editors have succeeded in bringing together a large number of contributors (49 in all) from a variety of countries, belonging to a multitude of specialties involved in this area, is by itself creditable and lends credibility to their effort at promoting comprehensive team management (as outlined in Chapter 6) of these anomalies. An eminently readable book, the information provided is quite thorough, it is well written and sustains our interest. Overall, I feel that the authors have achieved what they set out to do, that of 'providing an overview of facial clefts and craniosynostosis', that too in a very creditable manner.

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