BOOK REVIEW

Cardiopatías congénitas en el adulto

F. Pero Mollón and Luis D. Suárez, Buenos Aires, 2003: 352 pp.; 210 figs.; 17 tables. ISBN: 987-43-5631-6

A book on adult congenital heart disease is always welcome. Although finding up-to-date publications on most subjects within cardiology is easy, this is not the case with congenital heart disease, especially if information is sought on its problems and implications in adult patients. Congenital heart disease appears most often after birth or early in life, which is why its treatment has been managed by «pediatric cardiologists» up to now. In this regard, pediatric cardiologists have done their work well and, thanks to them, congenital heart diseases are no longer a problem specific to children. It is currently estimated, according to widely accepted data, that 85% of the patients born with a congenital heart disease reach adulthood, and conservative studies estimate that at least 40% of these will require specialized medical or surgical treatment. Thus, any publication which helps us to understand this new disease in adults is most welcome.

F. Pedro Mollón and the late Luis D. Suárez edited this book, bringing together the work of several Argentinian authors who are all members of the ICYCC of the Favaloro Foundation. It contains 21 chapters and is divided into three sections. The first section provides an introduction to basic pathophysiological and anatomic concepts relating to congenital heart disease; the second section presents the different diseases which the authors classify into two main groups, these being, according to their own terminology, «foreseeable defects in life-expectancy until adulthood» and «exceptional defects in life-expectancy until adulthood.» The third section deals with major syndromes and general problems common to many congenital heart diseases, including the clinical and pathophysiological implications of chronic hypoxia syndrome, pulmonary hypertension, congenital heart disease and pregnancy, congenital heart disease and endocarditis, arrhythmias and congenital heart disease, diagnosis with new imaging techniques, and psychosocial aspects. In my opinion, the book is very interesting. Their rich description of the symptoms of various entities is worth noting. The natural course of each is analyzed, as are the results of surgical therapy and invasive catheterization techniques. However, a more detailed and current description concerning the problems generated by the long-term evolution of surgically repaired congenital heart disease is missing. As with many books, the references are not up-to-date, and it is noteworthy that there is an almost complete absence of references to works published during the 5 years prior to this edition.

In conclusion, this is a good book that helps us to grasp the main concepts relating to congenital heart disease in adults. Nevertheless, it lacks a more thorough and up-to-date approach to the problems associated with repaired congenital heart disease.

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