

Practical interventional cardiology (2nd ed.)

Edited by Ever Grech and David R. Ramsdale.
London: Martin Dunitz, 2001; 486 pgs., 331
figs., 87 tables. ISBN: 1-85317-938-8.

«Heart disease constitutes the number one cause of death in the western world»: with this phrase, which is repeated over and over, begins the first chapter of the book *Practical Interventional Cardiology*, edited by Ever Grech and David R. Ramsdale in its second edition. But not a bit of its ramifications are lost by the repetition of the phrase, and the various therapies for curing or controlling heart disease, among them interventional cardiology, are of equal importance. In our country, coronary interventionist procedures have increased by more than 700% over the last decade, and future expectations are that we have not come close to reaching the limit.

Since the first balloon angioplasty performed by Gruentzig in 1977, the number of patients treated has continued to increase, and both the indications and the number of diverse techniques used have increased, with varying degrees of success, for trying to correct the existing limits.

Analysis of the indications for coronary intervention and the different techniques used constitutes the fundamental nucleus of this book. It is the work of multiple authors, and the editor has achieved a high degree of uniformity among the various chapters. The list of authors is impressive. Certainly, not every notable author is included, but those who are included are notable in their area of expertise.

Among the characteristics of this book that deserve to be pointed out is the loss of the prominence of strictly technical aspects in favor of the analysis of results, with, wherever possible, a review of the findings obtained in various clinical trials. Nevertheless, this philosophy is not manifest in all the chapters. Thus, in some chapters the methodological form still dominates, for example in the chapter on mitral angioplasty.

The chapters maintain a high degree of independence, analyzing concrete themes, it is to consult the book on specific aspects. But the fact that it is written by different authors also has some negative effects, such as the reiteration of certain themes, glycoprotein IIb/IIIa plaque inhibitors being one of the more obvious. This is more evident when the book is read as a whole, but it would be much less evident if

a theme were reviewed on its own, as would occur in the vast majority of cases.

Interventional cardiology is based on images, so that in any work that deals with this theme the image quality must be very high. This is the case in the majority of the illustrations in this book, and the rest are impressive. The text is easy to read, subdivided into sections and with a very accessible structure.

Although interventional cardiology is the meat of the book, *Practical Interventional Cardiology* also covers the rest of the therapeutic measures possible in the hemodynamic laboratory: mitral valvuloplasty, treatment of adult heart disease, peripheral interventionism, ablation of arrhythmias, septal ablation in hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, and recovery of intracardiac foreign bodies; although these themes are not habitual in our laboratories, the book provides us with the information currently available on these subjects.

Particularly interesting are the 3 last chapters of the book, 1 regarding auditing in interventional cardiology and the other 2 regarding aspects of the required norms for the training and accreditation of cardiologists who practice interventional cardiology. On this last aspect, the majority of the scientific societies are still declaring their positions, as at present there are no specific regulations for performing this highly complex technique that has not inconsiderable mortality-morbidity rates.

Among the book's limitations are those inherent in any book, given the inevitable length of time involved in the editorial process. This delay means that current aspects cannot be covered that are central to the interests of the interventional cardiologist, such as the use of stents without the use of medication.

In summary, this is a book on interventional cardiology that places emphasis on the practical aspects of the various procedures and their clinical indications. It is of high editorial quality, is clear, and is easy to read. We believe that it is fundamentally directed toward existing interventional cardiologists or those in training. In addition, it could be of great use as a reference for consulting cardiologists who are not interventional cardiologists.

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