



## Cardiac Anaesthesia (Oxford Specialist Handbooks in Anaesthesia)

Edited by M Barnard and B Martin

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Cardiac Anaesthesia joins a growing number of Oxford Specialist Handbooks in Anaesthesia and is presented in the usual 'white coat' pocket size with a durable cover familiar to this range of textbooks. The authors aimed to produce a book which provided all the information an anaesthetic trainee caring for cardiac surgical patients would require and also to provide an 'on-the-spot' practical reference guide. The book certainly fulfils both of these aims and I believe has a wider appeal. The authors are consultant anaesthetists based at The Heart Hospital in London, but 35 other consultants from the UK, North America and New Zealand have contributed to provide a balanced view of developed world practice.

The book is divided into three parts: Part one covers the cardiovascular system, anatomy, physiology, pharmacology (mainly pharmacodynamics) and cardiovascular diseases and treatment. I was surprised at the clarity and detail for such a relatively small book - this level of information is usually only found in larger reference textbooks.

Part two covers the organ system implications of cardiac surgery including the central nervous system, haematology, the inflammatory response, renal, respiratory and infectious complications. Part three deals with the clinical practice of cardiac anaesthesia and is extremely comprehensive including detailed chapters on interventional cardiology, paediatric

and adult congenital heart disease, transoesophageal echocardiography, cardiopulmonary bypass, deep hypothermic circulatory arrest and 'off pump' surgery to name a few. Each chapter provides references for further reading at the end. The chapter on paediatric congenital heart disease has a number of line diagrams to aid understanding of the various surgical procedures and there are various transoesophageal echocardiogram images throughout the book.

I would definitely buy this book if I was considering a career in cardiac anaesthesia but I would also encourage trainees to buy it as an adjunctive text to augment their understanding of cardiovascular physiology, pharmacology and anatomy in preparation for postgraduate anaesthetic exams, regardless of their aspirations in the field of cardiac anaesthesia. It also has much to offer staff working on cardiac or general intensive care units caring for patients with acute coronary syndromes or post cardiac surgery. If I were to make one criticism it would be that there is a degree of repetition of certain subjects within the book, pharmacology being an example. The authors acknowledge this and explain that it enables various sections to be used independently and I would agree with this view.

This is a comprehensive, well edited, pocket sized textbook which has appeal beyond its intended target audience.

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