

## Book Reviews

**CRANIOSYNOSTOSIS. Diagnosis, Evaluation and Management.** 1986. Edited by M. Michael Cohen. Published by Raven Press, New York. 606 pages.

“Craniosynostosis: Diagnosis, Evaluation and Management” edited by M. Michael Cohen Jr. is the most recent general treatise on the subject of craniosynostosis since the 1982 publication by David, Poswillo and Simpson. This volume provides a clear and comprehensive overview of the literature as well as providing detailed discussions of the contributing authors’ personal experiences.

The book is logically divided into four sections. The first, composed of the introduction and three chapters written by Cohen, reviews the history of craniosynostosis and its clinical epidemiology. Etiological considerations are summarized completely. An excellent review of classifications is provided.

The next section deals with the embryological development of the normal and abnormal skull. Sutural histology, both normal and deranged is described. The current knowledge base dealing with craniofacial growth is covered. This section is authored by world-renowned authorities.

The clinical aspects of craniosynostosis are discussed in chapters that cover the radiology of the condition, the neurological and ophthalmological aspects and the current state of treatment. These chapters are generally well-written and superbly illustrated.

The final section is a free-standing compilation of the syndromes of which craniosynostosis is a part. This chapter is 177 pages long and serves as a comprehensive catalog of the syndromology to date. It is, to my knowledge, the most complete review of its type that Cohen has published.

This volume has several weaknesses which do not distract from its value but do make it difficult to read. The illustrations are magnificent and comprehensive. Unfortunately, some of the labels on the histopathology sections are difficult to find. A lot of page turning is required to coordinate photographs and text. While this is easy to do with clinical illustration, I found it tiresome in areas less familiar to me. The book’s binding proved fragile and there are several typographical and header errors.

The chapter by Fernbach and Naidich is basic with much of the contained material redundant and certain areas not even addressed. Specifically, I found the lack of a comprehensive discussion as basal sutures to be a deficiency. A book of this type should give some indication of the relative values of different imaging modalities in these conditions: no critical assessment of this type was provided.

The discussion in chapters by Tessier and Cohen regarding the differences between lumpers and splitters in reference to syndromology merely serves to illustrate individual spheres of interest; it is distracting.

Jane, Persing and Tessier provide comprehensive discussions of the past and present treatments available for craniosynostosis and its syndromes. The illustrations are excellent. Justification for certain surgical maneuvers should have been provided. I expected to find a comprehensive discussion of dural plication and could not.

Any future editions of this volume should include a discussion of the natural history of uncomplicated trigonocephaly and a discussion of the role of the dura in craniosynostosis.

The invited authors and the editor have composed an authoritative volume, superbly illustrated and exhaustively complete. It should be in the personal library of all dealing with craniosynostosis.

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**THE ACUTE STROKE.** 1985. 1st Edition. By Vladimir Hachinski and John W. Norris. Published by F.A. Davis and Co. 286 pages.

There has recently been a proliferation of books about stroke. The scope of these books has varied enormously, ranging from large comprehensive multi-author texts, to specialized books about stroke rehabilitation. Nowhere is the focus exclusively on the acute stroke, as in this excellent volume by Hachinski and Norris.

These two Canadians have been at the forefront of patient care and research of acute stroke patients for many years now. This book provides a thoughtful and practical approach to the management of such patients. The early chapters discuss epidemiology and terminology. Quite rightly the term “Cerebrovascular accident (CVA)” is frowned on and it is indicated that strokes result from identifiable, often predictable causes and are rarely “accidents”. It is pointed out that the term is confusing, because a left sided CVA means a left hemisphere lesion to some and left hemiplegia to others. Use of the word “stroke”, while not perfect, is certainly preferable. The lack of precision of other terms such as T.I.A. and “Stroke in evolution” is discussed in a provocative manner.

Several excellent chapters on the vascular infrastructure and cerebral ischemia follow. These provide a nice insight into our current understanding of the pathophysiology of acute stroke, reflecting current basic research in this area. These chapters are written in a comprehensive, yet easy to understand format and are well referenced for one who wants to look up current literature in this area. The chapters on diagnosis of transient ischemic attacks and stroke provide a personalized approach to assessment of these patients and many clinical gems, based on the author’s extensive experience or dropped in the course of the discussion. The deteriorating stroke is discussed at some length and it is emphasized that there are many different reasons why a patient with an acute stroke may deteriorate clinically. While propagating thrombus in an artery is often considered the major reason, new cerebral events such as edema, secondary hemorrhage and recurrent embolism are also important. Systemic causes such as cardiopulmonary metabolic complications and side effect of drugs are all factors to be considered in this context. Careful clinical assessment and investigation can of course often detect the cause for deterioration and help realize the patient’s full potential for recovery. Further excellent chapters on the Young Stroke, Cardiac Disease and Stroke as well as management and prognosis are all present.