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Gastrointestinal Radiology

Book Reviews

Double Contrast Radiology of the Esophagus. By Gilberto Rosetti. Ishiyaku EuroAmerica, Inc., St. Louis, 1986. 158 p. US$45.00.

This book introduced by H. Shirakabe and authored by G. Rosetti of Verona, is a basic atlas of the double contrast examination of the esophagus not only for the specialist but for the general radiologist as well. The book covers various aspects of the normal and pathological esophagus.

The first chapter is a brief introduction to radiological examination of the esophagus using the double contrast method in conjunction with the air insufflator. The second chapter briefly covers the double contrast images of the normal esophagus.

This atlas uses diagrams and drawings that highlight those aspects most necessary for accurate radiological interpretation of various pathological conditions. The chapters concerning the most frequent pathologic conditions – hiatal hernia, peptic and infectious esophagitis, benign and malignant tumoral lesions – are well illustrated and documented. The illustrations in the various chapters are of good quality.

But the book is a guide, not an exhaustive compendium of different esophageal diseases; infrequent pathological phenomena like ulcerations due to medication, or esophageal Crohn's disease are not described, and Barrett's disease or acanthosis are not treated in depth.

This book is an excellent introduction to double contrast examination of the esophagus and will be appreciated and used by residents and most radiologists.

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Gastro-esophageal Reflux Disease – Pathogenesis, Diagnosis, Therapy. Edited by Donald O. Castell, Wallace C. Wu, David J. Ott. Futura Publishing Company, Inc., Mount Kisco, 1985. US$42.50.

This book reflects the current thinking on gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD). The editors, Drs. Castell, Wu, and Ott, are to be commended for affording us a compact and highly readable volume containing a wealth of information. The recent emergence of GERD and its attendant complications, consisting of reflux esophagitis, ulceration, peptic stricture, and Barrett's esophagus (a premalignant condition), and the fact that 10% of the American population is affected at one time or another by GERD, make this volume a timely contribution. The authors have tried to balance the older concepts with the current ones. An overview by Dr. Castell at the beginning of each section provides an updated version of the current status.

The book is essentially divided into three sections, consisting of pathophysiology, diagnosis, and therapy of GERD. The first section deals with pathophysiology and pathogenesis of gastroesophageal reflux, esophageal clearance, antireflux barrier, esophageal epithelial resistance, and the role of gastric factors, e.g., disorders of gastric emptying, acid and pepsin, and bile reflux.

The second section discusses various diagnostic tests used in the diagnosis of GERD. These include barium esophagram, esophageal manometry, acid perfusion (Bernstein) test, endoscopy and biopsy, the pH probe for continuous pH monitoring, and gastroesophageal scintigraphy. The continuous pH monitoring is now considered to be the best method for diagnosing GERD and has proven to be a powerful tool for the investigation of its pathophysiology. With the development of portable continuous pH monitors and computerized data analysis programs, a broader clinical application of continuous pH monitoring with GERD is anticipated.

The final section deals with therapy of GERD. Medical and surgical managements are adequately discussed. Separate chapters are devoted to complications of GERD including Barrett's esophagus.

This book is highly recommended to all clinical gastroenterologists, internists, and surgeons dealing with GERD and its complications. This volume certainly represents an up-to-date statement of current thinking on gastroesophageal reflux disease.

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Radionuclide Imaging of the GI Tract: Volume 2, Contemporary Issues in Nuclear Imaging. Edited by Fred. A. Mettler, Jr., MD MPH. Churchill Livingstone Inc., New York, Edinburg, London, Melbourne, 1986. 363 p. US$50.00.

The ability of radionuclide tracer studies to evaluate normal and pathological physiology is exemplified in their application to investigation of the gastro-intestinal tract. The exquisite sensitivity and the non-invasive and quantitative nature of these studies enables application to many problems of gastrointestinal disease while exposing patients to low radiation dose and minimal risk.

This volume of contributions by well-known experts in the field is a worthy compendium. The methodology is clearly presented and compared with other imaging and non-imaging

methods for evaluation of esophageal and gastric motility, reflux, gastro-intestinal bleeding, liver and spleen imaging, hepatobiliary and pancreas imaging, abdominal abscess and tumor localization and evaluation of peritoneal shunts.

Some redundancy is apparent: discussions of gallium-67 citrate imaging, gastric emptying and reflux imaging occur in two or more chapters. On the other hand there is only cursory mention of evaluation of Leveen shunts or hepatic artery perfusion studies. There is no mention of cholecystokinin administration for hepatobiliary studies of gallbladder contraction in chronic cholecystitis.

The chapter on computer methods, though informative, is not especially relevant in this volume and seems more appropriate for a general text on nuclear medicine. The discussion on ventriculoperitoneal shunts also appears out of place.

On the whole the illustrations are good but some are reproduced in a rather small format and many entities discussed in the text are not illustrated. Typographical errors are in evidence but are not serious except in the discussion of the radiation dose from Tc-99m-sucralfate where the absorbed dose is given in millirads per microcurie instead of millirads per millicurie.

This volume is a useful addition to the library of practicing nuclear medicine physicians and a helpful reference for residents. It serves to bring together in a cohesive whole a variety of related topics. The references are current and the overall style is organized and attractive. I especially enjoyed the chapters on liver and spleen imaging in benign and malignant disease for the way the radionuclide study is integrated into a general schema for evaluation of the clinical problem.

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