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The Neurological Manifestations of Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Immunodeficiency Syndromes

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BOOK REVIEW

The Neurological Manifestations of Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Immunodeficiency Syndromes

L.L. Barton and N.R. Friedman, eds. Totowa, NJ: Humana Press; 2008, 421 pages, 21 illustrations, \$139.00.

Although not a book with wide appeal for neuroradiologists, this broad but somewhat superficial review of *The Neurological Manifestations of Pediatric Infectious Diseases and Immunodeficiency Syndromes* may be a suitable reference in the libraries of larger radiology departments or imaging groups who encounter significant numbers of pediatric patients. There are, however, a great number of disconcerting facts with which one can impress others at social gatherings. (Did you know that “4.7% of adults in Baltimore, Md, possess antibodies to lymphocytic choriomeningitis virus”? Are you aware that most cases of Rocky Mountain spotted fever occur nowhere near the Rocky Mountains?*)

The editors' stated goal was to provide a “succinct, authoritative, up-to-date, evidence-based, practical, accessible reference.” They have largely achieved their intent, covering a wide range of infectious and immunodeficiency conditions, from those frequently and infrequently encountered in industrialized nations (eg, Epstein-Barr virus, Herpes virus, babesiosis) to those more common in developing countries (amebiasis, Lassa virus), though the emphasis is clearly on those seen in the United States.

The multiauthored sections are predominately divided by organism: “Viruses,” (includes the chapter “Neurological Consequences of Antiretroviral Treatment”), “Bacteria,” “Rickettsia and Spirochetes,” “Fungi,” “Protozoa,” and “Helminths,” with the penultimate section addressing “Primary

* More than half of all cases of Rocky Mountain spotted fever occur in the Southeastern United States.

Immunodeficiencies,” and the final section on the “Basic Principles of Selective Neurological Treatments.” Within each section, the fairly brief chapters typically subdivide into epidemiology, pathogenesis, clinical manifestations, diagnosis, and treatment for the range of conditions discussed, allowing facile retrieval of specific data that may be needed when encountering an imaging study of a child with a suspected or known infectious condition.

The reader should be forewarned, however, that the depth of information offered may suffer from the authors' emphasis on “succinct.”

Images, neuroradiologic or otherwise, are rare in this book; even the inclusion of neuroradiologic findings in the diagnosis portions of the chapters is widely variable. This is unfortunate because characteristic imaging findings are present in many of the discussed conditions (eg, progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy, Lyme disease, bacterial abscesses). Expanded descriptions of these and additional figures with representative imaging findings might add practical application for their target audience (physicians-in-training, primary care physicians, and subspecialists).

This book cannot be recommended as being of high value for practicing neuroradiologists, even those subspecializing in pediatric neuroradiology, but it may be valuable as part of a larger reference library, for those with a special interest in infectious diseases affecting children or those who just want to sound interesting at cocktail parties. By the way, did you know that you can get cat scratch fever from a dog?

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