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BOOK REVIEW

Title: EMERGENCIES IN GENERAL PRACTICE
Authors: A. J. Moulds, P. B. Martin and T. A. I. Bouchier-Hayes
Publisher: George A. Bogden, Ridgewood, New Jersey, USA, 1983 and in UK: MTP Press, Lancaster. ISBN 0-942068-07-6
Price: £10.95 **215 pages** **Index** **Hard cover**

I am keeping my review copy of this book in my car, easily accessible, and will probably buy another for the surgery. It is written by three general practitioners for general practitioners and covers most of the emergencies, trivial as well as life-endangering, that one meets in practice. The opening chapters give general advice on the doctor's legal and moral obligations, how to manage telephoned requests, drugs and equipment likely to be needed in an emergency, and the general management of paediatric crises. This is the longest chapter in the book, and a very valuable one. The remainder of the book lists, in alphabetical order, urgent conditions in the various systems, starting with cardiological emergencies. Each section of each chapter starts with the most likely incoming telephone request, the questions that should be asked, the differential diagnosis, then in a conspicuous box, the advice given over the telephone, and the management of the condition; advice and attend surgery the next day; visit and treat or prescribe; admit; what to tell the patient and the relatives — all good sound practical instructions based on experience.

For future editions a few points need to be added or amended in light of recent practice. In the chapter on obstetric and gynaecological emergencies is a section on contraceptive problems, and though "missed pill", breakthrough bleeding and coil falling out are mentioned, the real emergency of post-coital contraception is omitted. The new amendments to the Mental Health Act relating to admission under a section need updating.

Although Lt.Col. Bouchier-Hayes has contributed several articles to this journal, there is little direct sports-related emergency treatment in this book, but most sports specific injuries are from overuse rather than acute trauma. I would regard the book as an essential part of the kit of any doctor accompanying a team on a tour, especially overseas. Although one would hope that the management of most of the emergencies dealt with would be within the scope of an experienced GP, the value of the book would be for the hospital doctor coping with conditions in his team outside his field of specialisation. The first aid advice and home management of the less serious illnesses given in the book could also be a big help to the team physiotherapist on tour without a doctor. It must be borne in mind, however, that a doctor is not recognised as such when in another country, and that transporting controlled drugs across a frontier usually requires export and import licences from both countries concerned.

H. E. Robson