

EDITOR'S COMMENT

Continuing emergency care



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Emergency Medicine volume 2 dovetails nicely with volume 1 and both issues should form a good reference set for any busy GP. Once again, the team put together by Professor Ken Boffard has done an excellent job of covering difficult emergency situations in an understandable and practical way. Transferring patients in need of further care in an emergency is dealt with again, but with a slightly different slant and this article by Dr Lamond also covers the costs of the different options – something useful to have in the back of your mind when you have to make a clinical decision, but know that cost is also a factor.

The difficult subject of sexual assault in children is sensitively handled by Graeme Pitcher, who emphasises the importance of early medical and surgical care and then discusses the legal and social obligations of the attending doctor. Chest trauma is probably one aspect of emergency medicine that fills most relatively inexperienced doctors with trepidation, but Herbert Cubasch and Elias Degiannis demystify the topic by telling us that 85% of thoracic trauma can probably be dealt with without specialist surgical intervention, which is reassuring. Ken Boffard deals competently with the early management of open tibial fractures, emphasising the importance of appropriate primary management to the eventual outcome for the patient after sustaining this complex injury. In the shorter articles, he discusses trauma in pregnancy, again an aspect of trauma that can leave the average GP wishing for a fully equipped emergency unit on his or her doorstep.

Also in the shorter articles, Frank Plani has written an excellent guide to ensuring that the intercostal drain you carefully put in before transferring your patient does not come out. The management of burns is generally a specialised area, but it is useful to understand their primary care, particularly when having to stabilise a patient before transfer to a larger centre, and Adeline Muganza and Elias Degiannis explain this concisely and clearly. Finally, but definitely not unimportantly, Graeme Pitcher and Timothy Rogers discuss the best forms of child car restraints, going into the different age groups in some detail, and Virginia Wilson looks at the role of the GP in physical rehabilitation.

July is one of the Cancer Association's focus months for men's health and I have looked at the epidemiology of prostate cancer, which is the sixth most common cancer in the world in terms of the number of new cancers, the third most common cancer in men and the most common cancer in men in Europe, North America and some parts of Africa. In Nigeria, for example, it is the most common cancer in men. Testicular cancer is covered using the legendary cyclist Lance Armstrong as an example, particularly fitting in July as this is the month in which he attempts to win his 6th consecutive Tour de France. Don't try to get hold of me during the afternoon for these 3 weeks in July! Enjoy your reading.

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