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Book Review

Atlas of ultrasound-guided regional anaesthesia - A book review, Andrew T. Gray, Third edition. , Elsevier, Philadelphia, PA (2019). 422, ISBN: 978-0-323-50951-0

The third edition of Atlas of Ultrasound-Guided Regional Anaesthesia marks a change in format compared to the version first published in 2010. Seventeen authors have contributed to the diverse contents ranging from traditional nerve blocks to new approaches as well as analysis of rare events and new challenges in regional anaesthesia. The educational format of this book includes many illustrations and videos to explain the dynamics of regional anaesthesia. However, the emphasis on safety remains and a whole section is dedicated to this important topic.

The hardcover book is about the size of your anatomy atlas - not intended to fit your coat's pocket. The text is printed on glossy pages and colourful (sub-)headings and tables break it up into manageable paragraphs. The multitude of sonograms are easy to 'read', thanks to references and tags, and are of excellent quality, as are the high-resolution colour photographs.

Leafing through the atlas, it quickly becomes clear: this is a book for detailed self-study and offers helpful advice and theory on how to refine your regional anaesthesia skills. The beginner and intermediate practitioner will benefit from this well-structured book with its large introductory chapter covering the basics of ultrasound-imaging and the following detailed descriptions of a multitude of nerve blocks. The expert will enjoy deepening their knowledge and improving their clinical skills by analysing individual parts of performing more advanced peripheral nerve blocks and neuraxial blocks.

This atlas covers a myriad of nerve blocks, grouped by anatomical region. You will learn about the anatomical path of nerve structures as well as suggested techniques to perform a certain block and the 'what, where and how' of patient-positioning and probe-placement for optimal conditions. The section on peripheral nerve blocks is followed by a set of chapters on trunk blocks including different plane and sheath blocks as well as neuraxial blocks. You will also learn about nerve blocks of the head and neck, including blocks for airway management such as the superior laryngeal nerve block. Even the use of ultrasound in the paediatric population and

benefits of sonography in the obese or post-surgical patient are reviewed.

Each individual nerve block is nicely presented on a single page. Key points summarise the essentials and multiple images and comments facilitate understanding. 'Before/After' sonograms beautifully display the relevant anatomical structures, highlighted in the image. The reference section at the bottom of the page recommends articles for further reading and the 'Clinical Pearl Box' makes it easy to find relevant information quickly. To watch one of the 20 online videos through the book's electronic online version follow the 'PLAY'-button.

As mentioned before safety is a key feature of ultrasound guided regional anaesthesia and remains a cardinal topic of this edition. The last section of the book focusses merely on safety aspects and issues. You will find practical advice on lowering the risk of nerve and tissue damage, local-anaesthetic systemic toxicity and other important topics. There is a particularly interesting chapter on the challenges and limitations of performing regional anaesthesia in resource-constrained environments where use of consumables like sterile probe covers and ultrasound gel may need a more creative approach.

This is a fantastic atlas to deepen your anatomical knowledge and help refine your sonography skills for regional anaesthesia, covering traditional nerve blocks as well as new approaches. The individual blocks are explained in detail and presented nicely with additional information and videos for further studying. I can recommend this book for residents as well as specialists committed to improving their regional anaesthesia skills and it should have a place on your department's bookshelf.

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