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978-0-521-72057-1 - Headache

Todd J. Schwedt, Jonathan P. Gladstone, R. Allan Purdy and David W. Dodick

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Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the clinical and scientific expertise of our headache medicine friends and colleagues worldwide and thank them for teaching us so much about headache. We dedicate this small volume to those who care for patients with headache disorders.

We are grateful to the International Headache Society for permission to use the International Classification of Headache Disorders 2nd edition (ICHD-2) criteria, published in *Cephalalgia* (2004;**24** Suppl 1:9–160), throughout the book.

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Preface

This new volume on headache is designed for busy clinicians who have an interest in or wish to know more about headache medicine. It is divided into three sections, mirroring the way that patients are seen in actual practice.

The first section, “Acute headaches,” includes those headaches that we all need to be aware of on a daily basis, particularly in the emergency room (ER). These headache disorders can present challenges in diagnosis and treatment that are unique to emergency medicine. The second section, “Episodic headaches,” is really the purview of office, clinic, and consultant practice. This section includes a variety of common, and less common but interesting, primary headache disorders. Precise diagnosis of patients with episodic headaches leads to specific directed care and good outcomes in a large number of patients. The final section, “Chronic daily headaches,” encompasses some of the most complex and challenging headache disorders, many of which can consume a lot of effort and resources in order to separate out the primary from secondary disorders. The diagnosis of these patients requires expertise in headache medicine and neurology, sometimes more so than others.

The purpose of this volume is to get the reader up to speed quickly on each of the headache disorders. Each section contains

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highly condensed knowledge about what is important to know in terms of: key points, a general overview, clinical features, diagnosis, and treatment and outcomes. From our combined clinical knowledge of dealing daily with numerous headache patients we feel this approach will work in practice. The information learned about each headache disorder is core knowledge based on the current best evidence and experience in practice, knowledge that is unlikely to change significantly over the next few years. Each chapter ends with a short list of pertinent references for further reading, which should quickly lead the reader to the important literature, if desired. We know, however, that most busy physicians do not have the time or the inclination to do detailed reviews of the literature – nevertheless, as in all areas of clinical medicine, if the opportunity arises to study a particular headache disorder further then this book will act as an excellent guide.

Of all the headache disorders that we see on a daily basis, migraine stands out as one of the most interesting and clinically challenging disorders to diagnose and manage. You have to see hundreds of cases of migraine to get a feeling for this unique neurologic disorder because of the variations in presentation and nuances in management. On the other hand, having only seen an occasional case of cluster headache is sufficient for most clinicians to make the diagnosis with relative ease – treatment, however, being another matter!

There is an explosion of research and clinical interest in migraine and many of the new and unique primary headache disorders, and this will continue to expand in the upcoming decades as diagnosis, imaging, and therapies evolve and emerge. There is also a desire to look again at many secondary headache disorders to recognize and understand them better and to find ways to cure or lessen symptoms. Good examples of these disorders that are included in this volume are: cerebral venous sinus thrombosis, spontaneous

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intracranial hypotension, idiopathic intracranial hypertension, and intracranial neoplasm.

To conclude this preface, it is necessary to mention that some of the most problematic of the headache disorders are dealt with in this volume, including: medication-overuse headache, new daily persistent headache, and post-traumatic headache. There is no physician anywhere who has truly mastered the art of managing patients with these disorders, as in large part their scientific underpinnings have not been elucidated as quickly as we or others in the field of headache medicine would like. Nevertheless, as challenging as these patients can be, there is a great deal of satisfaction for the patient and their physician to work together to deal with these chronic headache disorders. This volume contains valuable information to help you practice headache medicine, a most interesting area of clinical neurology. We hope you enjoy this volume and use it regularly as a companion when you diagnose and treat your headache patients.