

Analgesia, Anaesthesia and Pregnancy

A Practical Guide

Fourth Edition

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A Practical Guide

Fourth Edition

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Contents

<i>Preface</i>	xiii
----------------	------

Section 1 – Pre-conception and conception

1	Assisted conception	1
2	Ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome	4
3	Anaesthesia before confirmation of pregnancy	7

Section 2 – Pregnancy

I – Procedures in early and mid-pregnancy

4	Ectopic pregnancy	9
5	Evacuation of retained products of conception	12
6	Termination of pregnancy	14
7	Cervical suture (cerclage)	16
8	Incidental surgery in the pregnant patient	18
9	Intrauterine surgery	21

II – Normal pregnancy and delivery

10	Anatomy of the spine and peripheral nerves	23
11	Physiology of pregnancy	31
12	Antenatal care	36
13	Aortocaval compression	39
14	Gastric function and feeding in labour	41
15	Drugs and pregnancy	44
16	Placental transfer of drugs	47
17	Prescription and administration of drugs by midwives	50
18	Local anaesthetics	53
19	Normal labour	56
20	Intrapartum fetal monitoring	61

vi	Contents	
21	Pain of labour	65
22	Non-pharmacological analgesia	67
23	Inhalational analgesic drugs	70
24	Systemic analgesic drugs	72
25	Intravenous patient-controlled analgesia for labour	75
26	Epidural analgesia for labour	78
27	Epidural test doses	83
28	Spinal analgesia	86
29	Combined spinal–epidural analgesia and anaesthesia	88
30	Spinal and epidural opioids	92
	 III – Operative delivery and the third stage	
31	Preoperative assessment	97
32	Operative vaginal delivery (Instrumental delivery)	99
33	Caesarean section	102
34	Spinal anaesthesia for caesarean section	107
35	Epidural anaesthesia for caesarean section	111
36	General anaesthesia for caesarean section	115
37	Cricoid pressure	120
38	Failed and difficult intubation	122
39	Awake intubation	129
40	Removal of retained placenta and perineal suturing	131
41	Postoperative analgesia	134
42	Enhanced recovery	138
	 IV – Anaesthetic problems	
43	Bloody tap	141
44	Dural puncture	143
45	Postdural puncture headache	146
46	Epidural blood patch	149

	Contents	vii
47	Extensive regional block	151
48	Inadequate regional analgesia in labour	155
49	Breakthrough pain during caesarean section	159
50	Backache	162
51	Chronic pain after caesarean section	164
52	Horner’s syndrome and cranial nerve palsy	166
53	Peripheral nerve lesions following regional anaesthesia	168
54	Spinal cord lesions following regional anaesthesia	171
55	Arachnoiditis	174
56	Cauda equina syndrome	176
57	Opioid-induced pruritus	178
58	Shivering	180
59	Aspiration of gastric contents	182
60	Awareness	186
61	Air embolism	190
62	Malignant hyperthermia	193
	V – Problems confined to obstetrics	
63	Induction and augmentation of labour	195
64	Oxytocic and tocolytic drugs	198
65	Premature labour, delivery and rupture of membranes	202
66	Malpresentations and malpositions	205
67	External cephalic version	208
68	Multiple pregnancy	210
69	Vaginal birth after caesarean section	212
70	Under-age pregnancy and advanced maternal age	214
71	Abnormal placentation	216
72	Placental abruption	220
73	Cord prolapse	222
74	Fetal distress	225

viii	Contents	
75	Shoulder dystocia	227
76	Intrauterine death	229
77	Uterine inversion	231
78	Major obstetric haemorrhage	233
79	Postpartum haemorrhage	238
80	Collapse on the labour ward	241
81	Maternal cardiopulmonary resuscitation	243
82	Amniotic fluid embolism	245
83	Cholestasis of pregnancy (obstetric cholestasis)	247
84	Acute fatty liver of pregnancy	249
85	HELLP syndrome	252
86	Hypertension, pre-eclampsia and eclampsia	254
87	Magnesium sulfate	261
88	Hyperemesis gravidarum	264
89	Maternal mortality	267
VI – Problems not confined to obstetrics		
90	Allergic reactions	271
91	Cardiovascular disease	274
92	Arrhythmias	278
93	Pulmonary oedema	281
94	Cardiomyopathy	283
95	Coarctation of the aorta	286
96	Aortic dissection	288
97	Valvular heart disease	290
98	Congenital heart disease	294
99	Pulmonary hypertension and Eisenmenger’s syndrome	298
100	Ischaemic heart disease	301
101	Endocrine disease	304
102	Diabetes mellitus	306

	Contents	ix
103	Anaemia and polycythaemia	310
104	Deep-vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolism	312
105	Thrombophilia	315
106	Coagulopathy	318
107	Von Willebrand’s disease and haemophilia	322
108	Disseminated intravascular coagulation	325
109	Thrombocytopenia	327
110	Lymphoma and leukaemia	330
111	Haemoglobinopathies	332
112	Connective tissue disorders	335
113	Rheumatoid arthritis	338
114	Cervical spine disorders	341
115	Kyphoscoliosis	343
116	Low back pain in pregnancy	346
117	The parturient with chronic pain	349
118	Neurological disease	352
119	Meningitis	354
120	Acute post-infective peripheral neuropathy (Guillain–Barré syndrome)	357
121	Past history of neurological trauma	359
122	Idiopathic intracranial hypertension	361
123	Intracranial tumour	363
124	Neurofibromatosis	366
125	Stroke	368
126	Epilepsy	371
127	Convulsions	373
128	Migraine	376
129	Multiple sclerosis	378
130	Myasthenia gravis	380
131	Spina bifida	383
132	Respiratory disease	386

x	Contents	
133	Asthma	388
134	Cystic fibrosis	390
135	Pulmonary fibrosis	392
136	Sarcoidosis	394
137	Acute lung injury and acute respiratory distress syndrome	396
138	Pneumonia	398
139	Sepsis	402
140	Hepatitis	406
141	Herpes simplex infection	409
142	HIV infection	411
143	Malaria in pregnancy	414
144	Pyrexia during labour	416
145	Migrants and other disadvantaged women	418
146	Psychiatric disease	421
147	Substance abuse	425
148	Obesity	428
149	Kidney disease	432
150	Steroid therapy	434
151	Trauma in pregnancy	436
152	Jehovah’s witnesses	438
153	Malignant disease	441
154	Transplantation	444
155	Critical care in pregnancy	448
156	Modified early obstetric warning scores	452
157	Invasive monitoring	455
 Section 3 – Puerperium and after		
I – The neonate		
158	Neonatal assessment	459
159	Neonatal physiology and pharmacology	462

	Contents	xi
160 Neonatal resuscitation		465
161 Perinatal mortality		469
II – The mother		
162 Drugs and breastfeeding		471
163 Follow-up		474
164 Maternal satisfaction		476
Section 4 – Organisational issues		
165 Antenatal education		479
166 Audit		482
167 Labour ward organisation		484
168 Midwifery training		487
169 Consent		489
170 Medicolegal issues		493
171 Record keeping		497
172 Minimum standards, guidelines and protocols		499
173 Risk management		503
174 Post-crisis management		505
175 Research on the labour ward		508
176 Obstetric anaesthesia organisations		511
177 Vital statistics		513
178 Historical developments in obstetric analgesia and anaesthesia		515
<i>Index</i>		518

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Preface

The first edition of this book was written in order to provide useful, practical information and advice to obstetric anaesthetists, in the form of a ready and easily accessible guide to obstetric anaesthesia and analgesia. The book was aimed primarily at trainees, both those starting in the maternity suite and their more experienced colleagues preparing for anaesthetic examinations. We also hoped the book would be of use to more senior anaesthetists and those of all levels involved in teaching obstetric anaesthesia, as well as non-anaesthetists working in the maternity suite. We are pleased that the book has been popular enough to warrant a fourth edition, and welcome two new authors to join the team.

In this fourth edition, we have reviewed and revised each section but kept to the original aims, structure and format, since we are convinced that the need for a short, practically based text still exists. In doing so, we have attempted to bridge the gaps between routine obstetric anaesthesia and analgesia and the care of women with coexisting medical conditions, and between anaesthetic care and advice before pregnancy and that during pregnancy itself.

As before, we have assumed basic anaesthetic knowledge and thus do not include topics such as anaesthetic equipment and drugs, etc., except where there are areas of specific obstetric relevance. We have tried to base the advice given on what we believe would be considered standard UK practice, supported by evidence wherever possible, although we have deliberately not included supporting references for each point made since this would, in our view, detract from the readability and ease of use of this book; readers wishing to obtain such reference lists are directed to the many larger, more comprehensive texts that are currently available.

We hope that the layout of the book is easy to follow. We have tried to provide a brief list of pertinent further reading where possible – though often this has meant that very large topics have been left relatively unreferenced, since there are few journal reviews broad enough in scope.

Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Dr D. Bogod, Dr D. Brighouse and Dr C. Elton to the first edition, and Dr A. May to the first and second editions. For this fourth edition, we are also grateful to Dr Aisha Alzouebi for her contributions to the chapters on obstetric topics.

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