

# BOOK REVIEW

**Handbook for Somatosensory Rehabilitation.** Claude Spicher, Paris: Sauramps Medical, 2006; 199 pages, \$36.00.

The *Handbook for Somatosensory Rehabilitation* provides a practical primer for individuals interested in the rehabilitation of patients following peripheral nerve lesions and particularly painful nerve lesions. This book will be useful primarily to rehabilitation specialists interested in sensory recovery and rehabilitation following nerve injury.

This book is authored by Claude Spicher, an occupational therapist who has devoted his career to the treatment and study of patients with peripheral nerve injuries. Spicher is a certified hand therapist of the Swiss Society for Hand Therapy and in 2004 founded the Somatosensory Rehabilitation Center in Switzerland. This book is easy to read and understand; it is obviously written with passion by an individual dedicated to this specialty.

Part One of this book outlines the basic definitions, testing, and rehabilitation principles for patients following neurological lesions. Spicher provides the reader with an excellent summary of the critical aspects that pertain to the evaluation of patients with sensory nerve injuries. He provides an excellent compilation of definitions, terms, and syndromes that are commonly seen in this patient population. With a sufficient bibliography, the reader is quickly directed to other, more detailed monographs and references. This book is not meant to provide a definitive literature review, but the comprehensive bibliography provides the reader with the capability to pursue other sources of specific interest.

Part Two addresses primarily the evaluation and treatment of patients with neuropathic pain and includes some specific treatment strategies that have worked in the author's personal experience. This

book also discusses and recommends the McGill Pain Questionnaire, which is just one of many questionnaires that are available to assess pain. Spicher should be commended for recommending the use of a valid and reliable measure for pain. Pain, however, is a complex phenomenon with psychosocial issues, such as anxiety, depression, and catastrophic pain, that can also impact these patients and should be considered in management but are beyond evaluation with the McGill Pain Questionnaire. In other sections, such as CRPS, the reader is provided with a brief overview of the topic, and the interested reader should research other sources for more comprehensive reviews.

This book provides the reader with an overview of a very complicated problem. It is good "starter" material for individuals interested in this patient population. It is filled with detailed personal reflection. As such, Spicher clearly states that he is not intending this book to be anything more than his interpretation over his very long career in managing these patients. Perhaps the most useful part of this book is the bibliography, which will direct the reader to manuscripts that may be obscure but also relevant. The book achieves its intent as Spicher states: A "handbook based on practice with its originality in the attempt to synthesize numerous publications and in the introduction of a few personal touches." It is, in fact, Spicher's personal touches, anecdotes, and musings that readers will find enjoyable and perhaps stimulating and beneficial to the evaluation and management of their own patients.

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