

BOOK REVIEWS

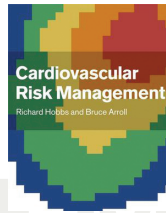
Book reviews

Cardiovascular risk management

Editors: Hobbs R, Arroll B

Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford, 2008

ISBN: 978-1-4-51-5575-5 **Price:** £26.99



My initial reaction on reading this slim, elegant volume was a twinge of professional jealousy which was rapidly replaced by enjoyment. An important feature is that nationalism has been set aside, with authors from Europe, New Zealand, America, Canada and Australia. Perhaps the next edition will embrace the challenges of developing countries as well.

This book is aimed at general practitioners, junior doctors, medical students and nurses. After reading it, these people (and I hope consultant physicians and health planners as well) will be well versed in the principles of total risk assessment and the need to assess the impact of all risk factors in planning the management of the person at risk of cardiovascular disease. The meticulously fair acknowledgment of the major international guidelines in each chapter leads to a certain amount of repetition.

Will the intended audience receive specific guidance from this book as well as a solid grounding in principles? Possibly not, in that all

international thresholds and targets are presented but without a very concise summary of the common ground, so that what are often minor differences between guidelines can cause confusion and perhaps frustration – the fault of the guidelines, not of this book.

While behavioural medicine may be regarded as 'soft' and qualitative by some, a little more detail on how to assist our patients in lifestyle change would have been welcome. Barriers to guideline implementation are indeed considered but late in the day. Perhaps these issues could helpfully be considered earlier.

I believe that this book is showing us the way of the future - the need for international dialogue to achieve as much common ground between different guidelines as the evidence permits.

I found this book thoroughly enjoyable, and not just because guidelines are 'what I do'. It can be recommended to all those involved in cardiovascular risk management. If it steers us closer to simplification of risk estimation and management, and in particular to international dialogue, so much the better.

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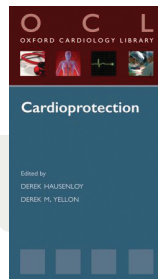
Cardioprotection

Editors: Hausenloy DJ, Yellon DM

Publisher: Oxford University Press,

Oxford, 2009

ISBN: 978-0-19-954476-9 **Price:** £5.99



For more than 30 years, the term 'cardioprotection' has been applied widely and often without precision to sundry interventions that reduce the incidence and severity of cardiovascular disease. For those of us who spend time occluding and reperfusing coronary arteries to model experimentally the effects of coronary thrombosis, 'cardioprotection' has a precise (and arguably the definitive) meaning; i.e. cardioprotection is the limitation or prevention of irreversible cellular injury in heart muscle as a consequence of ischaemia and reperfusion. In this little book, this definition is applied and is extended to consider all aspects of the medical management of acute myocardial infarction. This is a highly successful and justified approach that will maximise the appeal and utility of this text to a wide clinical and scientific audience. Barely 120 pages of text, nevertheless the book provides an up-to-date and remarkably comprehensive series of essays that convey an accurate snapshot of the basic and clinical science relevant to the rational treatment of myocardial infarction.

The editors and contributing authors are distinguished experts in experimental and clinical aspects of acute coronary syndromes. In eleven commendably succinct chapters, the authors provide coverage of the essential information, from the fundamental concepts of cellular pathophysiology and molecular physiology, to their clinical application in

the management of acute myocardial infarction. Each chapter is furnished with key references that provide ideal preliminary bibliographies for those unfamiliar with the field. As I indicated, the coverage is very comprehensive. The chapters provide information on basic definitions and descriptions of the pathological features of myocardial infarction; the current status of reperfusion therapies and adjunctive treatments, including antiplatelet and anticoagulant therapies; approaches to myocardial imaging; the longer term management of cardiac remodelling and dysfunction in survivors of myocardial infarction; emerging and experimental therapeutics, including the phenomenon called 'postconditioning', and reparative and regenerative therapies based on stem cell delivery.

At £5.99, this book represents excellent value for money. Its appeal should be wide and I would commend *Cardioprotection* to anyone with an interest, experimental or clinical, in the scientific and medical challenge of myocardial infarction. The obvious audience will include clinical cardiologists and cardiologists in training who require brief but authoritative information on the evidence underpinning practice. But basic scientists and clinicians embarking on research in cardioprotection will also find the book to be a highly accessible starting point. As an indication of the strength of my recommendation, I should add that I have bought multiple copies to present to new postgraduate students and research fellows as essential reading. So far, they have expressed their delight with my present.

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