

# Handbook of Clinical Alcoholism Treatment

*Editors: Johnson B, Ruiz P, Galanter M.*

*Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Philadelphia, 2003.*

*US\$39.95; pp316; ISBN: 0-7817-4158-0*

This is really a handbook in the literal sense of the word as it is of hand-size, and not only concise and comprehensive. The book provides a quick reference to the topic, starting with a brief introduction to the basic neurobiology of alcoholism and then concentrating on treatment aspects as the book's title promises.

Different modalities of treatment in the biopsychosocial context are systematically covered and widely referenced. The section on special issues targets topics such as foetal alcohol syndrome and alcohol problems in women. The Brief Behavioural Compliance Enhancement Treatment (BBCET) manual is included in the Appendix. Most interesting is the inclusion of a chapter on *Socio-cultural and individual influences on alcohol use and abuse by adolescents and*

*young adults* in such a short book, although the topic is not covered in great depth.

In brief, this small book is good enough for a quick reference to the treatment of alcoholism and would serve local junior trainees well. One major drawback is the way the small print of the text is presented as it is difficult to read.

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## Neuropsychopharmacology: The Fifth Generation of Progress

*Editors: Davis KL, Charney D, Coyle JT, Nemeroff C.*

*Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, Philadelphia, 2002.*

*US\$189.00; pp2010; ISBN: 0-7817-2837-1*

This official publication of the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology is a real textbook. It is unrivaled in at least 2 aspects: huge in volume, with more than 2000 pages, weighing 4 kg, and written by more than 290 authors. The book represents the most updated collection of information that "details advances in both the basic science and clinical application of recent research in psychopharmacology", as stated in the Preface of the book. It is a timely production at the turn of the century as it comprehensively summarises the enormous progress in understanding the fundamental physiology of the central nervous system and treatment of psychiatric disorders in previous decades.

The book is well organised along the lines of the well established tradition of previous editions. It begins with basic neuroscience, then covers new imaging techniques and new drug discovery, before addressing different mental disorders. Chapters in basic neuroscience and imaging are comprehensively illustrated and widely referenced. Different psychiatric disorders are covered in separate

sections, providing an overview of different aspects of each disorder. The major disorders are all described including developmental disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, affective disorders, Alzheimer's disease, substance abuse, and movement disorders. The section on impulsive and compulsive disorders is a new and valuable addition.

Certain sections or chapters could be interesting to individual subspecialties. The section on sleep disorders updates the most recent advances in sleep physiology. The chapter on neuropsychopharmacology in depression and the medically ill would benefit our consultation-liaison colleagues.

Apart from basic science and clinical aspects, the socioeconomic perspectives are also addressed in the chapters dealing with the economic burden of anxiety and stress-related disorders, the economics of treatment of schizophrenia, and the cost effectiveness of the new generation antidepressants — the last 2 issues are of definite interest to local psychiatrists who are engaged in the management of services.

The absence of discussion on cross-cultural psychopharmacology could be a significant omission. But all in all, this huge book is an invaluable addition to libraries as a reference. Its heavy weight should not be an excuse for not stocking it. There is an on-line search package that comes with the hard copy.

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