importantly, each chapter often includes a defined section for reviewing the complications and side effects of each technology, which is essential in assessing new treatments.

Rather than launching directly into each area of advanced technology, this volume begins with an in-depth discussion of the basics of individual technologies that form the backbone of conventionally used catheter- and guide wire-based vascular devices. These chapters are unique in their clarity, presenting a full understanding of how each individual device works. From the anatomy of simple and complicated guide wires to the construction of mechanically driven atherectomy devices, the concepts are easy to understand and well illustrated. Another valuable asset of this text is its integrated approach to the biology and biochemistry of the vascular system and the impact of various interventional devices and procedures on fundamental processes.

Typical chapters range from three to five pages, which permits a brief overview of many individual topics within the field, and allows the reader to obtain a very general knowledge of each topic. One drawback of this text that concerns me is the relative lack of standardized reporting of the results of the different interventional procedures. Although mention is frequently made to “clinical trials,” the exact construction of such trials and their methods for patient follow-up are not discussed. This uncertainty makes it impossible to compare one interventional modality against another, and frequently it is not clear whether a particular technique is clinically useful.

In summary, this is a useful book that reviews the development and use of various catheter-based interventional vascular technologies in concise, well-organized, and nicely illustrated chapters. It represents a starting point for those interested in developing an understanding of interventional techniques, and it will be useful to the practicing vascular surgeon. Unfortunately, the clinical experience with these devices was not compared with the clinical experience reported in the literature.

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Medical malpractice: A physician's guide

Surgeons have one of the highest rate of malpractice lawsuits, with approximately 15 cases filed each year per 100 surgeons. One cannot reasonably expect to have a surgical career without the prospect of frequent malpractice lawsuits with its financial impact and psychological trauma. Despite this prevalence, most surgeons have little experience with the legal process in a simple style with little legal jargon and few case references. He attempts to make the physician comfortable with the complicated world of law. Other chapters deal with pertinent issues such as malpractice insurance, physician role as an expert witness, tips on how to testify in court, and the psychology of patients, plaintiff attorneys, defense attorneys, and the defendant. Finally, the author gives advice on avoidance of lawsuits, and even discusses the new world of managed care and its effects on medical liability. My only criticism is the frequent attempt by the author to act as a cheerleader to sued physicians as they go through the psychological trauma of the malpractice case. This part is somewhat overdone but is not a major criticism of the book.

The author accomplishes what he has set out to do. It is an easy to read book that familiarizes the reader with the world of malpractice liability. The physician can read this book cover to cover and profit from it or read sections as necessary with the book acting as a reference.

I enjoyed this publication and recommend it to the readership of the JOURNAL OF VASCULAR SURGERY.

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Surgical anatomy and technique

Those of us who occasionally carry large surgical atlases in our briefcase for the last-minute review of a less frequently performed operation will praise the intent of the authors to come up with a practical solution. This small-format, paperback book is written by three experts, John, Panajiotis, and Lee John Skandalakis, from the Centers for Surgical Anatomy and Technique of Emory University School of Medicine. The pocket manual is intended to provide an easily available source for a quick review of the anatomy and surgical technique just before entering the operating room.

The 19 sections cover the authors' extensive experience and represent their surgical practice. Each section is devoted either to an organ (esophagus, stomach, duodenum, pancreas, small intestine, appendix, colon and anorectum, liver, spleen, or adrenal glands), an anatomic area (scalp, nail, neck, breast, abdominal wall, or carpal tunnel), or a specific surgical problem (hemias, varicose veins). The last chapter, which gives a brief overview of the most frequently used laparoscopic procedures, is written with the help of two additional authors, John Hunter and William Laycock, also from the authors' institution.

The organization of each chapter is similar and easy to follow, with each divided into one section on anatomy and one on surgical technique. The sections on anatomy are traditional, discussing general, surgical, and topographic anatomy of the organ first, followed by a description of arterial supply, venous, and lymphatic drainage and innervation. Concise discussion of the anatomy is accompanied by excellent illustrations, with many taken from the
Medical malpractice is a legal cause of action that occurs when a medical or health care professional deviates from standards in their profession, thereby causing injury to a patient. In common law jurisdictions, medical malpractice liability is normally based on the laws of negligence. Although the laws of medical malpractice differ significantly between nations, as a broad general rule liability follows when a health care practitioner does not show a fair, reasonable and competent degree of skill. Avoiding Medical Malpractice: A Physician's Guide to the Law is a reader-friendly, physician oriented, handbook on how to avoid malpractice lawsuits. As both a practicing surgeon and an attorney, Dr. Choctaw provides real world perspectives into both the medical and legal aspects of malpractice issues. Dr. Choctaw's insider's-point-of-view explains what physicians need to know both before and during legal proceedings. Key topics include: basic legal definitions, how to manage malpractice risk, how to be an effective witness in your own defense, how plaintiff and defense lawyers...