Book reviews

Going Higher: Oxygen, Man, and Mountains, 4th edition

Charles Houston
Seattle, WA: The Mountaineers, 1998
US \$22.50, 272 pages, softcover.

This book has earned a place on the bookshelf of many high-altitude sojourners for decades. First published in 1980 as *Going Higher: The Story of Man at Altitude*, this fourth edition is published under the title *Going Higher: Oxygen, Man, and Mountains*.

In the introduction the author states a determined objective to “make this book a good read.” Houston has succeeded in this effort. The language used avoids technical medical terms, allowing the book to be easily understood by a wide audience. Through the use of intriguing descriptions of how and when important information was discovered, the reader learns of new concepts in a writing style that engages our curiosity and sense of wonder. This newest edition has been updated with the latest available information on high-altitude medicine, and the author has further refined the writing style, layout, and organization to make this extensive material even more interesting and accessible.

The book is divided into 4 distinct sections. Part I describes the physics of atmosphere and the essential role of oxygen to nearly every living organism. Part II takes the reader through an easily understandable review of the process of delivery of oxygen from the air to tissue in the body. Part III is an up-to-date summary of mountain sickness and its diverse manifestations. Part IV explains current thinking regarding the acclimatization process that is essential to survival at high altitude.

Throughout the book a historical perspective, practical advice, and the telling of anecdotes help the reader to a meaningful understanding of the effects of lack of oxygen on the human body.

As a mountain guide, climber, and high-altitude physician, I found the information offered in *Going Higher: Oxygen, Man, and Mountains* as essential (and interesting) to any high mountain traveler as the equipment carried in one's rucksack. For a curious reader with an interest in the subject, the comprehensive content of this book provides an easily readable source from which to gain an understanding of high-altitude medicine and physiology.

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Dengue and Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever

D. J. Gubler and G. Kuno, editors
New York, NY: CABI Publishing, 1997 (1999 reprint)
US \$135.00, 478 pages, hardcover.

An estimated 50 to 100 million cases of dengue fever (DF) and several thousand cases of dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) occur each year. Having a case fatality rate of about 5%, DHF has become one of the most important vector-borne viral diseases in the world. This book provides one-stop shopping for what is known about this Flavivirus, its 4 antigenically related but distinct serotypes, the *Aedes* mosquito vector, and its human pathogenesis.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 get to the heart of the clinical spectrum and pathology of DF and DHF. The chapters include information about diagnosis, management, classification of DHF, and indications for hospitalization. The flow diagrams for critical management decisions are excellent.

Public health information officers, practicing clinicians, biomolecular geneticists, epidemiologists, immunohistopathologists, and pharmaceutical research scientists will all find their areas of interest discussed in the book, with more besides. RNA sequencing, envelope protein properties, immune response, clinical spectrum of disease, evaluation, treatment, vaccine research and development, dengue surveillance, and vector control programs are all covered in detail.

If all you want is a passing knowledge of DF and DHF, this book might not be for you. However, if you want to recognize and treat DF, DHF, and dengue shock syndrome with a substantial knowledge base, and if you want to be fully prepared for the rising dengue pandemic, this book is just what the doctor ordered.

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Handbook of Human Toxicology

Edward J. Massaro, editor
New York, NY: CRC Press, 1997.
US \$149.95, 1111 pages, hardcover.

The *Handbook of Human Toxicology* is a collection of toxicologic information on selected topics. Only a very few areas are included from this extremely broad field. Limited by the sheer volume of available information,