

Stroke: Facts Series

By Richard I Lindley. Pp. ix + 133. Illustrated. R180.00. Oxford University Press, Southern Africa. 2008. ISBN 978-0-19-921272-9.

Stroke remains a leading cause of death and adult disability in South Africa. Despite this, stroke often fails to attract much public attention and this topic is often underemphasised in both undergraduate and postgraduate training. *The Facts – Stroke* is a recent publication forming part of *The Facts* series published by Oxford University Press. The author, Richard Lindley, from the University of Sydney, is a well-known stroke expert who has published widely in this field.

In this concise 133-page book, a large amount of research data has been summarised to provide an evidence-based medicine guide to stroke. All aspects are covered, including definition, incidence, risk factors, causes, management, prognosis and prevention of stroke.

Each chapter begins with a list of key points and the text is interspersed by useful tables, anatomical diagrams and figures of CT and MRI scans. Short case studies illustrate certain clinical points. The causes of stroke in the older person, children and young adults are discussed in chapter

4. The author adopts a cautious approach in his discussion on thrombolysis and interventional treatment, and interested readers will need to familiarise themselves with more recent data from the Safe Implementation of Thrombolysis in Stroke Monitoring Study (SITS-MOST) and data from the recently published ECASS III trial. The chapter also includes a brief discussion on different rehabilitation methods. Stroke unit care is recommended. With regard to rehabilitation, an individualised process is emphasised, depending on impairment.

The Oxfordshire Community Stroke Project classification has been widely used as a means to understand the main impairments associated with the different types of ischaemic stroke. This chapter also includes a brief discussion on different rehabilitation methods. 'Living after stroke' is a useful chapter on the often neglected topic concerning early and late problems that occur after stroke.

This book is a quick and an easy read and students and health care professionals will find it a useful introduction to stroke medicine. I would strongly recommend it to undergraduate medical students and registrars starting their training in neurology or internal medicine and to doctors who care for stroke patients and who are not up to date with the current stroke literature.

Alan Bryer