
First published in 1999, and updated in 2005, the latest edition of this textbook continues to fill the gap between elementary handbooks and comprehensive volumes on transfusion medicine. This venerable book has always aimed to shepherd clinicians who prescribe transfusion, as well as guide specialists who provide consultations in this regard; and for these purposes, there are few alternative texts.

The main strength of this book is its data-driven and thoroughly referenced focus on clinical issues. The editor and the 49 other contributors are distinguished educators in the field who manage to convey up-to-date information and practical recommendations with minimum fuss. The text is divided into 4 sections: the use of blood components in clinical practice, blood components and derivatives, preventing and managing adverse events, and quality in transfusion practice. Individual chapters cover topics in the manner of their encounter in clinical practice. For example, there are chapters about transfusion in widely different clinical situations, including cardiac surgery, transplantation, hemolytic anemia, congenital coagulopathy, acquired disorders of hemostasis, and therapeutic apheresis. There are also specific chapters covering the appropriate use of specific blood products, including platelets, granulocytes, immune globulin, and lymphocytes.

In a total of 31 chapters, there is minimal overlap and little (if any) contradiction among the recommendations of different authors. This is a testament to judicious editing. The coverage of controversial issues is fairly balanced. The latest edition has added 4 new chapters covering important topics: massive transfusions, transfusions in critical care, pathogen reduction, and alloimmunization against RBC antigens. These new chapters are welcome additions. Noticeably missing are basic topics such as blood donation and processing, product storage, basic immunohematology, and blood group antigen chemistry. These omissions serve to demonstrate that the focus of the book is on clinical decision-making rather than on laboratory-related issues.

The book is typical of an American Association of Blood Banks publication, being well laid out and user friendly. The abundant illustrations and tables, although rather plain, readily deliver important information. The book is well indexed and extensively referenced. References constitute approximately 20% of the book’s volume (some 200 pages or so). The book works well as shelf reference; however, the individual chapters and the book as a whole can be read rather quickly and easily. I would also recommend this book to those developing institutional or departmental transfusion policies, and who may appreciate a practical text without an exhaustive exposition of historical information or laboratory technique.

In sum, the 3rd edition of *Transfusion Therapy, Clinical Principles and Practice* is an excellent and unique resource that enables confident evidence-based clinical decision-making.

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