

Book report

Attempting to define the role of the recovery room

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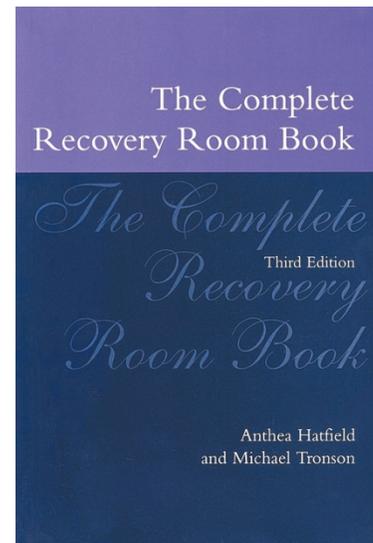
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Hatfield A, Tronson M: *The Complete Recovery Room Book*, 3rd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001. 567 pp. ISBN 0 19 0263218 3 (Pbk)



Due to increasing health care costs, hospitals are becoming more involved in interventional health care, while more chronic care is transferred to non hospital institutions. In recent years, therefore, the role of the recovery room has changed to become the central point of peri- and postoperative care. A broad range of patients is now cared for in the recovery room, from those awaiting discharge home to severely ill patients requiring intensive monitoring/care. This continuum of heterogeneous patients creates a requirement both for ongoing education for the personnel involved and for information that is easily accessible.

The Complete Recovery Room Book is intended to be a practical reference, or to cite the authors, "to save lives". It covers the basics of patient care in the recovery room and will be useful to those staff members who may be involved in the care of postoperative patients, but do not have a specialised education. This book is also a convenient source of additional information.

The book is organized into 28 chapters and 8 appendices, which are aimed towards readers with different levels of competence. The book begins with "the 20 golden rules of the recovery room" which include useful hints for the new recovery-room doctor. Basic subjects such as pharmacology and physiology are covered, in addition to more specific physiologic problems and management issues. The book is clearly presented, which is helpful when searching for specific information. Throughout the book, the authors use several didactic and graphical measures to help the reader to find and to memorize necessary information (e.g. useful aphorisms are included where possible as well as the

author's personal opinions and experiences, such as "treat the patient, not the monitor"). Although the author states that this book is a "receipt book" for the (young) staff, it contains several useful references that provide the reader with available evidence. Furthermore, the appendices provide useful tables, for example regarding drug infusions or how to convert metric and SI units.

Although several issues are discussed within the book, one must be aware that *The Complete Recovery Book* cannot replace specialised teaching books, since the treatment of patients in the recovery room involves a variety of skills. It presents, however, an invaluable source of information for those who are actively working in the recovery room, in areas of care other than their primary speciality.

Competing interests

None declared.