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For this edition we have three book reviews across a variety of topics including: neurological rehabilitation, sports rehabilitation, and alternative therapies. I would like to thank each of the reviewers for their time and effort in reviewing these books. All ISCP members are offered a further 15% discount on the listed price of any Elsevier books if they are purchased via the members section of the ISCP website. Finally, if any members are aware of new books which they would like to have reviewed, please let me know.

#### **Pocketbook of Neurological Physiotherapy.**

**Editors: Sheila Lennon & Maria Stokes.** Churchill Livingstone, Elsevier 2008. 317 pages. ISBN: 978-0-443-06854-6  
Price GBP£22.99.

**Reviewer:** Dr. Susan Coote, MISCP, Lecturer, Physiotherapy Department, University of Limerick. susan.coote@ul.ie

This is a great little book that first came to my attention when a student pulled it out of their bag during a neurology tutorial. Students are a discerning bunch who don't part easily with their money so I think that in itself is a vote of confidence for this book. The preface states that the book aims to "give a basic overview of the physiotherapy management of people with neurological disability" and it does just that with very clear summary tables and supporting text. There are some commonalities with Maria Stokes' previous book "Physical Management in Neurological Rehabilitation" and although I wouldn't suggest the pocket book as a sole text, it is a handy accompaniment to larger textbooks such as that one and/or "Neurological Rehabilitation" by Carr and Shepherd.

The book is divided into three sections; Background Knowledge, Clinical Decision Making, and Other Considerations with 16 chapters, the largest of which is one on treatment. The contributors list is impressive with a range of well known, published, international names in the list. There are lots of tables that summarise the concepts using research evidence throughout and the boxes outlining clinical prompts also look useful for novice practitioners, or those who work infrequently with neurological patients.

Section one takes us through a summary of evidence-based practice, patient and carer-centred care, and the wider context of rehabilitation. It then moves on to how people recover including motor control, neuroplasticity and motor learning, pathology of common conditions, and the impairments that contribute to activity limitations. Section two considers the principles of rehabilitation and assessment and goes on to discuss treatment options for a range of the most commonly seen neurological conditions, concluding with outcome measurement and continuity of care. Section three is a useful summary of other considerations such as respiratory, cognitive perceptual, and communication issues. It also has a very nice chapter on orthotic management. The appendices are nearly chapters in themselves providing information on

investigations, drug treatments and standardised abbreviations.

I see this as a book that sits on the desk in the gym or office that students and those new, or returning, to neurological rehabilitation will use as a quick reference guide or revision source. It will also be a useful refresher and summary of the evidence-base for our practice for those who have worked in the area for some time.

#### **Sports-Specific Rehabilitation.**

**Editor: Robert Donatelli.** Churchill Livingstone, Elsevier. 2006. 368 pages. ISBN-10: 0443066426. Price GBP£38.99

**Reviewers:** Sara M. Cates, LMT, SPT, Department of Physical Therapy, University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, San Diego, California and Dr Johnson McEvoy MISCP, MSc, Private Practice, Irish High Performance Boxing Team.  
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Dr. Robert Donatelli offers a good addition to the sports rehabilitation literature with this modern approach to rehabilitation and management of the athlete in his book *Sport-Specific Rehabilitation*. This book is not a litany of injuries in specific sports but offers guiding principles in sports rehabilitation. Dr. Donatelli is renowned for his publications *Physical Therapy of the Shoulder* (2004) and *Orthopaedic Physical Therapy* (2009), now both in their 4th editions. He is due to present a course on the topic of sports-specific rehabilitation in Ireland in 2010.

Beginning with a review of basic and relevant rehabilitation principles, the book allows the reader to link the science behind common injury and movement dysfunction to current treatment methods within the sports medicine setting. Topics include: exercise principles; muscle fatigue, muscle damage and overtraining concepts; pathophysiology of overuse injuries; core evaluation; physiological basis of exercise specific to sport; and special considerations for the athlete.

*Sport-Specific Rehabilitation* is well researched, as you would expect from the quality of the contributors, and each chapter includes some combination of illustrations, graphs, and tables for a straightforward and comprehensive read. It also includes evidence-based case boxes for quick reference, chapter summaries, and short lists of further reference information to create a valuable resource for both the health professional interested in effective treatment delivery and the motivated athlete wanting education on recovery. Standout sections in up-to-date treatment examples include Part 4: "Pathophysiology of Overuse Injury in the Athlete" and Part 6: "Physiological Basis of Exercise in Sport".

The unique foundation of *Sport-Specific Rehabilitation* is that encourages a dynamic interplay between a team of health professionals and an injured athlete working towards successful return to optimal sport function. Topics such as the effects of strength training, nutrition, and neuromuscular training on the athlete shows advancement and rising of the bar in the profession of physical therapy for its extensive scope of practice and potential future within the athletic arena.

**Physiotherapy Ireland. 2010;31(1)****Trick or Treatment? Alternative Medicine on Trial,**

by Simon Singh and Edward Ernst. Bantam Press 2008. 352 pages. ISBN 9780593061299. Price GBP£16.99.

**Reviewer:** Maria Garrett, MISCOP, PhD scholar, University of Limerick. Email: Maria.Garrett@ul.ie

This book aims to reveal the truth about “complementary and alternative” interventions using an evidence-based approach. Patients often ask questions about alternative therapies, for example, “What is the difference between Dry Needling and Acupuncture?” or “Will Arnica help with my healing?” Often people with persistent or incurable conditions try many alternative therapies. Spending money on ineffective, unproven or potentially harmful therapies, means that patients may not benefit from effective therapies. This book is suitable for easy leisure-time reading for clinicians - that may encourage reflection on these types of situations and a deeper understanding of evidence-based medicine.

The authors are Professor Edward Ernst, MD, PhD - the world's first professor in alternative medicine and Simon Singh, PhD - a science journalist. Professor Ernst practised for many years as a medical doctor including some alternative therapies. More recently, his research group has spent fifteen years evaluating these treatments. Together they bring balance to the book presenting research methods and results of trials evaluating acupuncture, homeopathy, chiropractic therapy and herbal medicine in a logical and comprehensible manner.

Chapter 1 describes the origins of evidence-based medicine from the first randomised controlled trial in 1746. Chapter 2 reveals the history of acupuncture, the evidence evaluating it and the importance of the “blinding” concept is described. The Cochrane Collaboration is also introduced here. Chapter 3 follows an identical structure regarding homeopathy. The meta-analysis is described in this context. Chapter 4 describes the origins of chiropractic therapy. In addition to the approach and evidence evaluating it like the other chapters, there is a section on evaluating risk and benefit. Chapter 5 discusses herbal medicine, the evidence behind the effective and non-effective treatments, the risks, and the power of placebo. Chapter 6 entitled “Does the truth matter?” describes a detailed account of why the results of the trials discussed in chapters 2 to 5 matter in terms of cost effectiveness and patient safety, why the routine use of solely placebo interventions is unacceptable, and the top ten culprits of promoting unproven medicines and medicines shown to be ineffective. The appendix consists of a rapid guide to alternative therapies. This summarizes the evidence behind other therapies in a page including alternative diets, Bach flower remedies, massage and oxygen therapy.

Overall, it is a well written, thought provoking book. In summary, it will leave you better informed about evidence-based practice and more knowledgeable about alternative therapies – their postulated mechanisms of action and efficacy. It challenges the clinician to critique their practice and the researcher to challenge their role.