The multiple ligament injured knee: a practical guide to management

Edited by G. C. Fanelli

Pp 268. New York: Springer, 2004. ISBN: 0-38740-548-8. £154.00.

Multiple ligament injuries of the knee occur predominantly in young, fit and active patients. They are potentially crippling but, if managed appropriately, a reasonable level of function can be expected, although it is unlikely that the knee will return to normal. Fortunately, these injuries are rare but this means that few surgeons have significant experience in their management. This book, with 250 pages and 29 expert contributors (28 American and 1 German), is therefore of great value. The experience of the editor Dr Fanelli includes a personal series of 35 combined anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and posterior cruciate ligament (PCL) injuries and 41 PCL and posterolateral corner injuries. The book can be read from cover to cover but its main value is as a source of reference.

The first four chapters describe the basic principles of anatomy, biomechanics, assessment, classification and non-operative management. Chapters 5 to 9 deal with the surgical techniques required for the various combinations of injury. Chapters 10 to 17 deal with associated injuries such as those to vessels and nerves, rehabilitation and complications; the last chapter contains six case studies.

The chapter on graft selection occupies only five pages (including illustrations). This is of fundamental importance and I think merits a more comprehensive discussion. I found the presentation in chapters 6, 7, and 8 a little confusing. Chapter 6 describes the surgical treatment of ACL, PCL and medial side injuries; chapter 7 ACL, PCL and lateral side injuries, and chapter 8 ACL, PCL, medial and lateral side injuries. Inevitably, there is a degree of overlap, although it is very interesting to obtain the opinions of different authors on the management of the same injuries. An overview of priorities followed by a more anatomically-based approach may be more logical.

The illustrations are presented in a slightly curious way. There are black and white prints throughout the text with selected illustrations reproduced in colour in the central portion of the book. It would be preferable to have only one version of each illustration and for the colour prints to be associated with the text which they illustrate. There are no illustrations in the final chapter on case studies which makes hard work for the dedicated reader to follow.

These criticisms should not detract from the value of this book. This is a field of orthopaedics in which we are still learning and no book can give the answers to all the problems to be faced. At the present time, this is as comprehensive a review of our current

knowledge of this difficult and challenging subject as can be found. It should be a mandatory purchase for any surgeon with an interest in soft-tissue injuries of the knee.

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Articular cartilage lesions: a practical guide to assessment and treatment

Edited by B. J. Cole, M. Malek

Pp 336. Berlin etc: Springer-Verlag, 2004. ISBN: 0-38795-540-2. £154.00.

This excellent book covers the details of cartilage anatomy, basic science, physiology, defects and injuries, and all possible treatment programmes. It even goes beyond its brief to include subjects such as unicondylar arthroplasty, knee realignment and adjustment of the patellofemoral joint. It includes a chapter on meniscal transplantation. The book is beautifully illustrated with many colour plates, bound in a most pleasing style.

The subject of articular cartilage lesions is developing at a great speed so that an analysis of all the available information is required from the multiple experts and authors in this field. The two main authors have edited the book well and there is much basic evidence presented, but in spite of the extensive bibliography quoted, there is still a marked absence of prospective studies in many of the treatment programmes they describe. However, the present state of the art and science of this subject is well presented and it will be of widespread interest to orthopaedic surgeons, physiotherapists and others working in sports injury and rehabilitation. Patients may also wish to see some of the diagrams of their treatment programmes.

The chapter on non-operative treatment is controversial and has a substantial bibliography. The practical aspects of cartilage injury and a treatment overview is well expressed by algorithms. The surgical techniques of arthroscopic debridement, bone marrow stimulation and osteochondral grafts are well described by experts in their fields. Similarly autologous chondrocyte implantation is clearly described and illustrated, and the results include 12-year follow-ups. Although autologous chondrocyte implantation in the osteoarthritic knee has been disallowed by the FDA and NICE, the author, Tom Minas, was given approval for specific cases, making this a very valuable chapter. The other chapters are not specifically related to hyaline cartilage, but allied to it, such as meniscal transplantation and limb realignment. The place of the latter in the overall treatment of the patient with early osteoarthritis is secure.

Part three of the book consists of 130 pages of case studies. These are certainly interesting to the specialist but such a substantial percentage of the book might perhaps have been shorter. The decision-making factors are well presented in each case and they make fascinating reading. This book is timely and welcome. I am sure that it will go into further editions, because revision surgery will be important in this subject.

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