Book Review: *Missile Injuries of the Brain, Spine, and Peripheral Nerves, Second Edition*

By: Harjinder Singh Bhatoe
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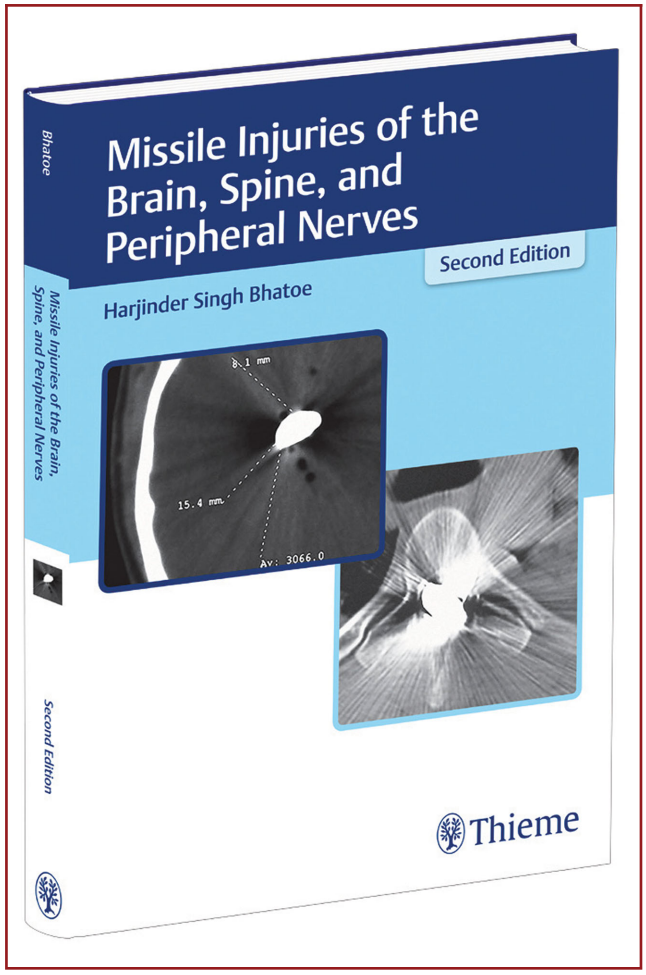

The author is to be congratulated for this text which provides a comprehensive overview of missile injuries that might be encountered by neurosurgeons. His experience in the Indian military gives him exceptional insight into these injuries which are rarely seen by most neurosurgeons. The appropriate audiences for this book are neurosurgical residents, attending neurosurgeons who cover trauma centers and emergency rooms, and trauma surgeons. The first edition of this book was published in 2003 by Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers under the title Craniospinal Missile Injuries and had limited distribution in the USA.

In some sections the terminology reflects the author's Indian heritage and may differ between countries, such as the levels of evacuation in the triage chapter or the inconsistent use of splinters, shrapnel, or retained bone or metal fragments. The principles, however, are easily understood and well explained. His style of writing also occasionally makes definitive statements implying practice standards where reasonable variability exists. Examples include "Artificial dural substitutes with the exception of lyophilized human dura are contradicted", quoting a 1972 paper as evidence; and "it (bullet) will exit the skull, leaving a much larger exit wound"; not mentioning the rare exceptions where a tangential impact on the curved skull can result in a larger entrance than exit wound. The author often clarifies these statements later in the text, but the reader should be cautioned not to use the text as a quick reference for a complex clinical scenario and rely on only 1 or 2 sentences to direct management.

Despite that caution, this book is an accurate overview of very complex topics. The text covers all pertinent topics for missile and non-missile injuries to the brain, spine, and peripheral nerves including wound ballistics, pathophysiology, history of treatment strategies, imaging, critical care, surgical and medical management, and blast injury. While comprehensive in coverage, it occasionally lacks depth for complex topics such as critical care management. Another example is an implication that mild blast induced brain trauma will be treated with the same algorithms as posttraumatic stress disorder.

The author clearly has extensive experience caring for patients with these injuries as highlighted in the many images and photographs he uses to illustrate his points. His experience gives him the unique ability to create an authoritative reference covering the breadth of these injuries throughout the nervous system. Any single authored text, however, runs an increased risk of having relevant omissions when covering many topics. In this book behind armor blunt trauma, consideration of intraoperative use of factor VII for extreme coagulopathy, and computed tomography generated 3-dimensional printing of cranioplasty flaps are a few examples. There is 1 significant typographic error where the seminal Vietnam Head Injury Study is referred to

as the voluntary health insurance scheme. Overall, my congratulations to Professor Bhatoe on this excellent and informative book that will be a welcome addition to any neurosurgeons library.

Disclosures

The author has no personal, financial, or institutional interest in any of the drugs, materials, or devices described in this article.

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