

Book Review: *Headache Simplified*

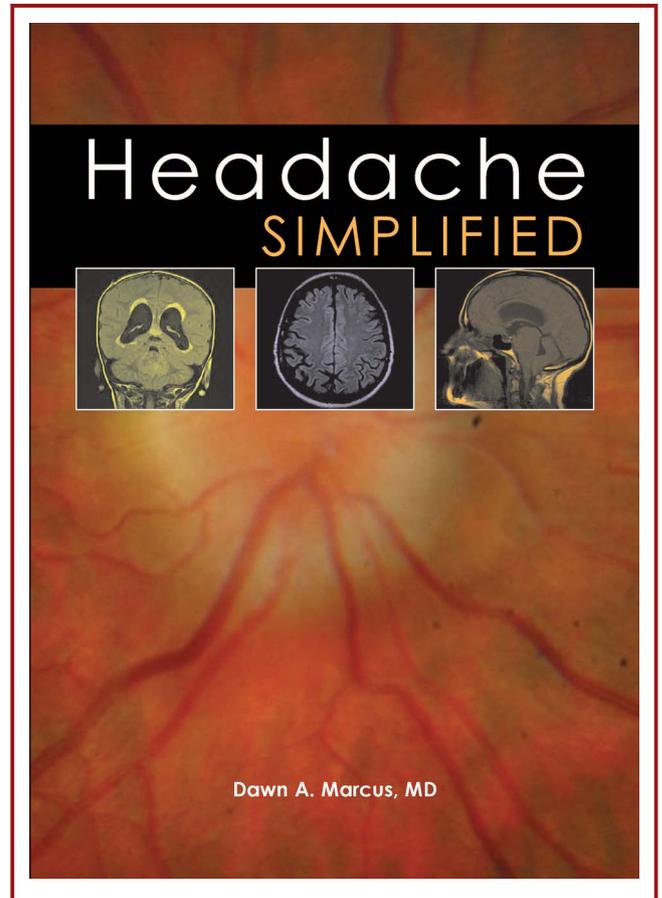
By: Dawn A. Marcus
 Published by: Tfm Publishing Ltd, Shrewsbury, Shrewsbury, UK, 2008
 Paperback: 208 pp.
 Price: \$59.95
 ISBN: 978-1903378-67-0

Headaches are a common problem both for patients and their physicians. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 47% of the world population had a least 1 headache in the last year. In the United States, it is estimated that approximately 45 million people experienced a headache over the past year and a little more than 2% of emergency department visits are for headaches each year. No matter what medical specialty we practice, our patients will report headache. If you do not have a lot of headache patients in your practice, then you are probably not asking about headaches. Our patients' headaches can be minor or can consume their days, causing time away from work and everyday family enjoyment. Therefore, it is really important to be able to diagnose and treat headaches appropriately. If you do not have a lot of experience with headaches, the approach to diagnosis and treatment can seem overwhelming. So, if you could figure out an easy way to approach headache diagnosis and treatment, you and your patients will be happier.

Dr Dawn Marcus has written a book that makes the approach to headache seem easy. *Headache Simplified*, as the title implies, was written to help medical practitioners understand headaches, both common and uncommon. And, unlike more extensive texts on headaches, she wanted to make it easy for anyone to read this brief book (208 pages) and feel comfortable understanding and treating the headaches that we face in practice every day.

At the beginning of the book there is a glossary of the common terms used in each of the 10 chapters. Many of these words are very familiar to many of us, but, for those with little headache experience, the definitions are quite helpful. Each chapter has a key summary at the end that reviews the major points of the chapter and a nice list of references that can be used for more details if desired. Much of each chapter is taken up by tables that give more detail about the topics in the chapters and are quite useful for understanding the topics and excellent for treatment overviews.

This book covers the common tension headaches, migraine headaches, and cluster headaches in nice detail. But less common headaches are also included. The book is divided into 10 chapters, each of which is succinctly organized. There are chapters on epidemiology, diagnostic testing, pathophysiology, treatments, and more. An interesting chapter on comorbidity discusses such topics as stroke, patent foramen ovale, epilepsy, fibromyalgia, obesity, and other comorbidities. Because headaches are so complex, a chapter covering the treatment of headache in children and women is especially helpful for the reader. An overview of hormonal influence on headache is included in this chapter.



Given the popularity of alternative medications in the media and on the Internet, I was pleased to find a well-thought-out discussion of the complementary therapies and alternative medications and their role in headache treatment. Yet another chapter reviewing both uncommon headaches and headaches in the geriatric population is a wonderful way to end this brief book. Basilar migraine and benign intracranial hypertension (with normal lumbar puncture opening pressures given for children and adults) are discussed in this chapter. There is even discussion of hemicrania continua, Short-lasting, unilateral, neuralgiform headache attacks with conjunctival injection and tearing, trigeminal neuralgia, post herpetic neuralgia and the important topic of giant cell arteritis.

I especially enjoyed the wonderful chapter on the emergency treatment of headaches that will help reduce the confusion on how to break a severe headache. There is discussion on the effectiveness of the various treatments and suggestions for post-emergency department care to try to keep patients from returning to the emergency department.

This book was published in 2008 and there are some things that should be updated if a new edition is published. The American

Academy of Neurology and the American Headache Society have published an evidence-based guideline for migraine treatment (*Neurology*. 2012;78:1337-1353). The book chapter on treatment could be updated (lamotrigine is no longer considered effective, for example) to reflect these guidelines. Also, botulinum toxin injections are now approved by the US Food and Drug Administration for chronic migraine but are described as ineffective in the book.

For practitioners who have extensive headache experience and commonly treat a large headache population, this book will seem too simple. However, for general practitioners, residents, and medical students, this is a wonderful text to help solidify one's understanding and approach to a common and sometimes frustrating disorder. You will enjoy the tables in each chapter that help make things easy to understand.

This is a well-written book that reads quickly and could easily be read in a weekend. But even nicer for the reader is the ability to return to the tables in each chapter when trying to decide on a diagnosis or treatment. This book is so well organized that it becomes a quick and easy reference when faced with the day-to-day decisions of a busy practitioner.

Disclosure

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

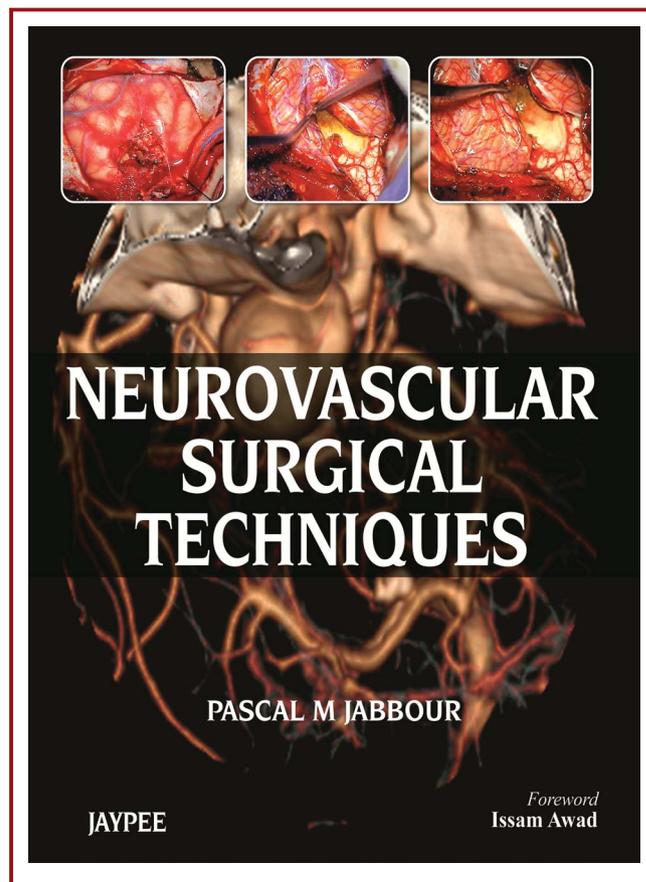
Neil S. Lava, MD
Department of Neurology,
Emory University,
Atlanta, Georgia

10.1227/NEU.0000000000000202

Book Review: *Neurovascular Surgical Techniques*

By: Pascal M. Jabbour
Published by: Jaypee Brothers Medical Publishers Ltd., New Delhi, India, 2013
Hardcover: 433 pp.
Price: \$182.00
ISBN: 978-93-5090-088-8

Dr Jabbour has edited a beautiful compact volume on modern neurovascular surgical techniques. Within the rubric of “surgical” the editor appropriately incorporates both open neurovascular as well as endovascular techniques and herein lies, in fact, the originality of the book. Most of the chapters present in a relatively balanced fashion details concerning both open microsurgical and endovascular techniques appropriate to deal with the particular vascular problem discussed. Upon reading this book, some may consider that there has been undue emphasis on endovascular techniques vs open microsurgical techniques; however, I feel that



this emphasis is appropriate given that so much has been written over the past few decades about open microsurgical techniques to deal with neurovascular disease. Additionally, those of us that began our career as open neurovascular surgeons must admit that the slope of evolution and improvements in endovascular techniques currently fast outpaces that of microsurgical techniques.

One of the treasures of the book is the condensed, yet beautifully illustrated summary of so many years of work in Dr Rhoton's laboratory on neurovascular anatomy. These initial chapters in anatomic background are followed by 2 interesting chapters on microsurgical and endovascular instrumentation. There follows a number of chapters on the microsurgical and endovascular techniques applicable to aneurysms in different locations, arteriovenous malformations, and intracranial and spinal arteriovenous fistulas. The next several chapters are important in that they emphasize that the treatment of stroke and ischemic cerebrovascular disease is now, or should certainly be, an important part of neurosurgical practice. The book ends with thoughtful chapters on the future of endovascular and microsurgical techniques and very helpful chapters on “getting out of trouble and complication avoidance” both during endovascular and microsurgical procedures. Not to be missed is an excellent article by Dan Barrow and his colleagues on cavernous malformations, which is beautifully illustrated and provides invaluable comments on “pearls and pitfalls.”