

Anesthesia: A Comprehensive Review, Fifth Edition.

Edited by Brian A. Hall, M.D.,
Robert C. Chantigian, M.D. Philadelphia,
Elsevier Inc., 2015. Pages: 302. Price: \$99.00.

Practitioners of anesthesia and modern medicine today are busier than ever. With expanding clinical volumes, increasingly medically complex patients, and advances in surgical techniques, it can be challenging to stay up-to-date with new knowledge while maintaining the basic anesthetic principles learned during medical school and residency. Although basic concepts may seem esoteric, knowledge of the fundamentals of anesthesia is at the core of being able to deliver a competent anesthetic and maintain excellence throughout the course of one's career. Whether a new learner in the field of anesthesiology or an advanced practitioner, clinicians could benefit from a periodic review of the fundamental principles as well as the latest innovations in the practice of anesthesiology.

Anesthesia: A Comprehensive Review has been doing just that for nearly 25 yr. Drs. Hall and Chantigian have once again put out an updated review book that, in keeping with the title, is fairly comprehensive in its scope. It has 1,001 questions divided into two broad sections: the basic and clinical sciences. Each question offers four multiple choice answers as well as a thorough explanation of the correct answer with relevant sources cited. Some of the explanations include comparative tables or diagrams to enhance the learner's understanding of the concepts. According to the authors, "each question has been vetted by two or more reviewers in the various anesthetic subspecialties" and provides the learner with "a guide to ... areas needing further study."

A fairly slick online and fully downloadable version is also provided for the technologically savvy who prefer not to tote around textbooks. These versions can be used on personal devices such as computers, tablets, and even smartphones. When downloaded, *Anesthesia: A Comprehensive Review* can be used on the go even in areas without Internet access such as planes or favorite "off the grid" locations such as tropical island Continuing Medical Education conferences. This version also offers an "Interactive Assessment" option, where questions can be viewed and answered in a similar manner to computerized

examinations, with immediate feedback based on the answer chosen by the learner. The downloadable version will track what questions were answered correctly and incorrectly on a Scoreboard feature, allowing users to quickly and easily return to frequently missed questions. It also allows one to start over and erase previous grievous errors, which can help the learner feel a little better as progress improves!

The fifth edition of *Anesthesia: A Comprehensive Review* maintains the series' reputation as an updated, well-organized learning tool for the review of fundamental concepts. This series has become a library staple of anesthesiology residents as well as clinicians who engage in lifelong learning.

When one considers purchasing a review book of this nature, the thought is often "Will this help me pass an examination?" The questions in this book are not thoroughly similar to those written by the American Board of Anesthesiology for their in-training and certification examinations. The questions tend to be more succinct and are written with the purpose of helping reinforce key anesthetic facts. Although this book is not comprehensive enough to use as a sole study source for residents for anesthesia boards, it serves well as an adjunct to reading source textbooks and review articles. The broader benefit of *Anesthesia: A Comprehensive Review* beyond just being a study aid is that it can help improve an anesthesiology practitioner's fundamental understanding of important anesthesia tenets and thus help improve judgment and daily clinical practice. With changes to Maintenance of Certification in Anesthesiology, American Board of Anesthesiology boards, and the broader goal of not just passing an examination but becoming a more competent and knowledgeable lifelong perioperative physician, resources such as the Hall and Chantigian book allow for longitudinal learning by reinforcing fundamental principles and introducing newer anesthetic knowledge.

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