

PREFACE

When we set out to put together this stroke handbook, we wanted to provide busy clinicians with a quick guide to help them address real-time issues often encountered in stroke care. In reality, many stroke patients worldwide are not seen by a neurologist at first contact and the question most often asked is “what should I do next?”

By arranging the topics in chronological order, from the pre-hospital setting to hospitalization and secondary prevention in the clinic, we are hoping that the use of this handbook will be instinctive. We tried to be as specific as possible in recommending actions to be taken, yet flexible enough for use under conditions that may be less than ideal. We avoided redundancies, overlaps, and inconsistencies by asking each author to address specific important clinical issues. This meant, however, that we had to rely on repeated references to specific sections elsewhere in the handbook when the need arises from another particular topic to close the loop, almost simulating the encounter with a stroke patient and the possible ups and downs one may go through during the process of stroke care.

This handbook is neither meant to replace stroke textbooks and published guidelines nor an attempt to oversimplify the issues behind the appropriate care of stroke patients. We all have the natural obsession and compulsion to know more about the science behind the disease and the treatments. The list of evidence and suggested readings at the end of each section will, therefore, help users in their search for more detailed and comprehensive information.

We are indebted to the authors for their excellent contributions. While this handbook may not be as extensive as textbooks and references, their work was by no means any less gargantuan. Often, it is more difficult to be concise and to pick out the most important things that really matter in the face of the mammoth information available instead of simply writing down everything that is known about a specific topic. The completion of this handbook is, therefore, a testament to the remarkable expertise of each contributor.

With the increasing popularity of “strokology” as an interest not only to neurologists and geriatricians, we hope that the availability of a practical handbook like this one will contribute to the collective efforts in reducing the burden of stroke worldwide.

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