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Book Review

Oral and Intravenous Bisphosphonate-Induced Osteonecrosis of the Jaws: History, Etiology, Prevention and Treatment.

By Robert E Marx. New Malden: Quintessence Publishing, 2007 (148pp. p/b, £58). ISBN 978-0-86715-462-7.

The author of this 150-page book is perhaps best known for his work on hyperbaric oxygen in the management of osteoradionecrosis. He has now turned his attention to bisphosphonate-induced osteonecrosis of the jaws, [BIONJ], a phenomenon that he first formally described in 2003 and is now more usually referred to as 'bisphosphonate-associated osteonecrosis of the jaws'. Although a 'new disease', the condition is analogous to 'phossy jaw' seen in 19th and early 20th century workers who handled white phosphorus.

This textbook opens with a description and history of BIONJ, outlines drug mechanisms and then describes the medical indications for the use of bisphosphonates. The fourth chapter provides a description of osteopetrosis, which the author cites as a genetic analogue for BIONJ. The following two chapters address the risks, prevention and management of BIONJ, whilst the seventh

and final chapter contains details of the clinical features and management of 12 cases of BIONJ at differing stages of the disease. There is a helpful glossary included at the end of the text.

The book details the basic science in a very accessible fashion and even a cursory scan of the text will provide the reader with a wealth of easily understood information. It is well illustrated with diagrams, clinical photographs and radiographs, all of which are reproduced to the high standard that is a hallmark of this publishing house.

If readers are expecting to find easy to follow, evidence-based protocols for dealing with BIONJ within this book, then they will be disappointed. Because of the relatively recent emergence of this condition, there is little hard evidence base for the suggested management protocols, which will of course continue to evolve as more data is gathered.

The author classifies the various stages of BIONJ but it would have been much clearer if this information had been presented in tabular form together with the suggested management strategies, rather than gleaning these from the case reports in the final chapter.

In summary, this is a very easy

to read text which provides a useful and detailed overview of a recently described disease. The reader must be aware that the suggested management strategies are largely based on case studies and will need to take account of revised approaches as new, evidence-based data emerges.

John Hamburger
University of Birmingham School of Dentistry

