

Book Reviews

Headache and Facial Pain

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An abundant clinical literature describes the signs and symptoms of temporomandibular disorders. The relationship between temporomandibular disorders, orofacial pain, and headaches is well recognized, although poorly understood. This book provides an in-depth, scholarly presentation of the current knowledge of orofacial pain and headaches in relation to the physiology and pathophysiology of orofacial tissues.

The book is divided into four sections.

The first section describes the pathophysiology of pain and the role of nerves, muscles, blood vessels, hormones, and psychological factors in the pathogenesis of pain. The inter-play of these factors is discussed in a separate chapter. The opening chapter of the book, which compares and contrasts the main classification system for headaches and facial pains is particularly interesting. The author draws attention to the deficiencies in the taxonomy of temporomandibular disorders.

The second section of the book describes general clinical aspects. Data collection and diagnostic criteria for the common disorders are discussed. Treatment methods, including drugs, biofeedback, and exercises are described.

The third section describes the diagnosis and treatment of headaches. The primary headaches—tension type headache, migraine, chronic daily headache, paroxysmal hemi-crania—and their variants are described in detail.

The final section describes diagnosis and treatment of facial pain. Causes of pain are classified as being neuropathic, myogenous, arthrogenous, or psychogenic. The chapters provide an overview of these problems together with some interesting and relevant case studies, but this does certainly not represent a comprehensive coverage of orofacial pain. It is extremely surprising that no mention is made of odontogenic pain.

Each chapter is referenced. Many are heavily referenced and sometimes this is taken to an extreme. The list at the end of the chapter on pharmacologic treatment in the third section of the book for example runs to more than seven pages.

This is not a book for those looking for easy explanations, for clearly, in the field of chronic orofacial pain and headaches, easy explanations do not exist. The complexity of the subject is made evident.

The value of this book is probably as a reference for clinicians in need of placing orofacial pain in the context of current neuroscientific thinking. It will not be of interest therefore, to many orthodontists. For those with a special interest in facial pain, however, this is a most interesting contribution.

RJ