'Clubfoot—A Comprehensive Approach (Past, Present, and Future)' [Dr RL Mittal]

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Clubfoot has trouble humanity since documented history; ancient tomes document the problem, and many archeological specimens and pictures of the past have shown that the problem has existed since the advent of mankind.

The last century has seen dramatic changes in the evolution of our understanding and the concepts of treatment. Nevertheless, a book dedicated to the subject, which comprehensively covers all aspects of management, based on a single surgeon's lifetime experience is worth its weight in gold. Today, we have seen just the right kind of text emerge from the pen of Prof RL Mittal. The senior author was privileged to write a foreword for this book, and it is a proud moment to see that the appreciation for this text has poured in from worldwide sources.

The author has transferred his passion for research, and his quest for answers related to clubfoot into a pleasantly written and well-formulated tome on the subject. It is amazing to see the vast experience being serially documented, in chapters ranging from epidemiology to historical perspectives, to imaging techniques, and the evolution of surgical techniques. He has talked about the Ponseti techniques on one side and even described talectomies (done in neglected cases in the past) to management by Ilizarov techniques. This makes for a comprehensive collection and allows both the novice student and the experienced surgeons many insights into what needs to be done.

One unique feature of this book is the description of the pathoanatomy of the club foot; this is based on the research work carried out by Prof Mittal on fetuses that he personally dissected during his postgraduate thesis research work, and which have influenced his work ever since. The detailed descriptions and pictorial depiction alone make this book worth reading and a mandatory recommendation for all surgeons dealing with clubfeet.

The relevance of this text to the underdeveloped countries is very significant; chapters discussing extreme clubfeet, which are a consequence of neglect, seen only in Asia and Africa in the 21st century, cannot be found elsewhere. This alone, plus the authors' description of a new technique to correct this, which he calls the DOLARZ-E, is a great method to understand when one is dealing with severe deformities due to neglect.

Some other issues unique to this text are discussions about preventive measures for the control in the global population, a brief description of the genetics, and of course a brief mention of orthotics for the future.

All in all a great addition to all medical libraries, and this will achieve the level of a book of reference. The good thing about this that this is even available as an e-book!

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