

BOOK REVIEW

Complete Dentures. A Clinical Manual for the General Dental Practitioner

Hugh Devlin; ISBN 3-540-42183-1; Springer-Verlag, Berlin, Heidelberg; 2002, Price £37

This is a compact book has just over 100 pages and is illustrated with 72 colour photographs. There are seven chapters which roughly follow the clinical stages for complete dentures construction with a final chapter that rounds up some loose ends. Each chapter is well referenced with suitably selected articles from current research.

The first chapter outlines the normal procedures in assessing a patient prior to treatment, with particular attention being paid to identifying errors in the present dentures and the management of denture induced stomatitis. The second chapter describes the techniques and philosophies for impression taking and includes sections on problems related to patients with 'flabby' ridges and an exaggerated gag reflex. The third, extensive, chapter encompasses rather more than the title 'Determining the jaw relation' would expect us to believe, as it includes a fairly detailed section on positioning and setting up denture teeth. The fourth chapter outlines procedures for checking the dentures at the try in stage. The chapter also has more information than just a bare discussion of what to do at such an appointment and goes on to talk about the use of posterior teeth with alternate occlusal anatomies and the benefits of different types of articulator. The fitting of the dentures and the need for occlusal adjustment is described in the fifth chapter. Chapter six outlines the likely painful problems with which a patient may return and how these may be corrected. The final chapter ties together a number of unrelated topics, including domiciliary visits, denture marking and denture repairs.

Overall the style is fairly easy to read, and each chapter is full of additional content. But I am not sure that all these procedures are entirely practical in a general practice environment. For example, the author recommends the setting up of the anterior teeth at the chairside. A commendable suggestion which undoubtedly develops the patient's confidence, but where do the correct shade and mould of denture tooth come from? Some chapters have too much detail including topics of historic interest (the use of plaster and pumice rims) or which are probably outside the realm of the high street practitioner (denture space impression techniques) and more the remit of the specialist prosthodontist.

The book's title refers to it as being a Manual for GDP's but it gladly does not follow the prescriptive form of the traditional clinical manual as it provides a much wider background to the theory and practice of each clinical stage. It appears that this book is directed towards the mature GDP who wishes to expand and improve his complete denture prosthetics, while also appealing to the VT to help him better understand complete dentures and wants to consolidate his undergraduate knowledge.

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