

Pediatric Respiratory Disease. Bettina C Hilman. (Pp 953; £148.00). Philadelphia: Saunders, 1993. 0 7216 4683 2.

The vast multiauthor textbook seems to me to be akin to the thumb and blanket beloved by Linus in the Snoopy cartoons; very comforting, but often of little practical use in a tight place. Respiratory paediatricians seeking a comfort have hitherto only the monumental Kendig to turn to; now a new largely North American rival has appeared on the scene. This multiauthor textbook comprises nearly 1000 pages, starting with some basic science and physiology, diagnostic evaluation and then sections on the major respiratory diseases. Amazingly for a paediatric textbook, there is no major chapter on the growth of the respiratory system. The coverage of specific diseases is patchy, being outdated at the growing points, but with very good accounts of more standard topics. The index is often very unhelpful in trying quickly to track down answers. Inevitably, despite the size

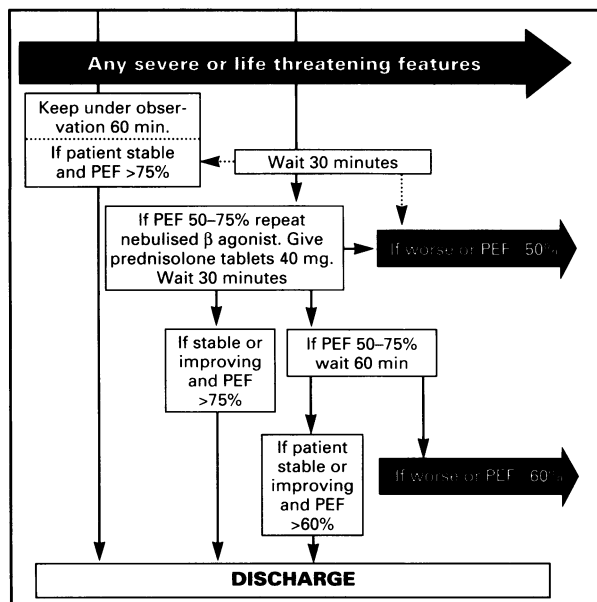
of the book, the information on rarities is insufficient to guide clinical decisions. The references are extensive and reasonably up to date. There are many well produced illustrations. My favourite moment of unintentional light relief was the double headed stethoscope, which is straight out of Professor Branestawm (and if you do not know who he is, you should not be looking after children). So who will buy this book and for what purpose? It is far too large for MRCP candidates; trainees (and trainers) in paediatric respiratory medicine will want to have access to a copy as a source of emergency comfort when faced with a rare problem and no access to Medline; and big libraries will want a copy to fill the shelves. My copy was stolen more often than Kendig, which is probably a fair reflection of the merits of the two books, but most overstretched personal purses will wait to see the other multiauthored books which are rumoured to be coming soon before spending £148 on Hilman. – AB

NOTICE

Occupational Asthma in Practice

A course on Occupational Asthma in Practice (organiser Dr K Venables) will be held at the National Heart and Lung Institute, Dovehouse Street, London SW3 6LY on 1–2 February 1994. Enquiries to 071-351 8172 (24-hour answering service) or Fax 071-376 3442.

CORRECTION



Several authors' errors appeared in chart 6 of the British Thoracic Society's *Asthma Guidelines Supplement* published in March 1993. In the moderate asthma pathway of the chart >50-75% values should read 50-75% throughout. Further amendments are shown as dotted arrows (or a dotted line in the box to the left) in the figure, which is a detail of the chart showing management of moderate and mild categories of asthma.

