

Intracoronary Diagnostic Techniques

Edited by Fernando Alfonso and Javier Botas. Madrid: McGraw-Hill Interamericana, 2003; 414 pages. ISBN: 84-486-0486-5.

The current paradigm resulting from the change in our understanding of coronary atherosclerosis can be summed up as “the coronary lumen versus the coronary wall.” This physiopathologic concept is crucial to understanding the new diagnostic and therapeutic focuses of ischemic heart disease. The book *Intracoronary Diagnostic Techniques*, edited by Dr Fernando Alfonso and Dr Javier Botas, arrives at an especially opportune moment to disseminate this concept.

In this book, the authors—who have extensive experience in the field of cardiac surgery—have included practically all of the techniques used to study the coronary arteries. For those techniques in which the authors have less expertise, well-known international experts were invited to contribute.

With so many contributing authors, the book’s basic message could easily have been diluted or biased in favor of certain techniques. This would have been—had it occurred—counterproductive to the book’s primary aim: to introduce noninterventional cardiologists to the new coronary artery exploratory techniques, which are providing new insights

into atherosclerotic coronary cardiopathy. The coherent “discourse” of the book, evident from the very beginning, is the principal achievement of Dr Alfonso and Dr Botas. Even though computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging are not intracoronary techniques, their inclusion at the end of the book is appropriate because both techniques will likely permit, in the near future, a noninvasive method for studying the coronary tree that will profoundly change how patients with “coronary artery disease” are diagnosed and treated.

Other highlights of the book include the well-balanced length of each chapter and the excellent use of images. These features make the book easier to read and facilitate comprehension of the various techniques, especially for readers not directly involved in cardiac surgery,

To the readers of this book review, allow me to give you some advice: read this magnificent text and you will expand your understanding of atherosclerotic coronary cardiopathy. This advice is especially intended for noninterventional cardiologists—the book’s title notwithstanding.

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