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Venous Disorders of the Leg: Principles and Practice

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There is not a wide variety of books about venous disorders. Tretbar has written a book for a broad group of readers interested in the venous human system. The major aspects of venous anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology and especially varicose veins, their diagnosis and treatment, are being discussed on 139 pages.

Tretbar must be interested in medical history. In many chapters he goes back to the roots of medicine, starting at the first page of his book with the circulation model of William Harvey. The book is written in an easy-to-read language, which increases the value of this book, also for those people for whom English is not the native language. It is clear that, due to the small volume, the book is somewhat limited.

In the first chapter about the anatomy of the venous system, I like the drawings very much, since they give an excellent impression of the main superficial venous system. Unfortunately, there are many anatomical variations in the venous system, which are not indicated in these drawings. The variations are especially important for the anatomy of the venous system in the popliteal fossa. The terminology of the veins is correct, but frequently used names like Giacomini veins are not mentioned in the drawings, but can only be found in the text. For those who are not familiar with this complicated use of names in the field of phlebology, this can lead to some confusion. Although modern investigation techniques made the classical functional tests like Trendelenburg and Swatch test out of date, Tretbar mentions many of them in chapter 3. In chapter 4 I found that Tretbar gave much attention to Doppler investigation, although in the field of phlebology people are nowadays more and more using direct duplex scanning (color Doppler imaging), which is mentioned but not explained extensively. The clinical pictures are of great value.

Therapy is divided in a chapter about surgical techniques and a chapter about sclero-compression therapy. In the last-mentioned Tretbar does not mention the possibilities for major varicose veins like saphena femoral incompetence.

The book ends with a short chapter about the complications of chronic venous insufficiency and the last chapter about thromboembolism.

I can recommend this book to all those physicians who see patients with venous diseases (and as we know 1 out of 12 healthy people above the age of 12 years will develop signs of chronic venous insufficiency). It is a book that gives a lot of information in a small volume, very well grouped in chapters and subchapters and in easy-to-read English.

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