

BOOK REVIEW

A Practitioner's Guide to Pilonidal Sinus Disease

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I applaud this recent book by Dr Pravin Gupta, (an expert in the field of proctology) that dedicates itself to the management of this difficult condition. This is long overdue and is a timely addition to the available literature on this important subject. For me, it has always been a little mysterious why the management of pilonidal disease has become the pervue of the coloproctologist. The book beautifully defines the nature of the disease, its etiopathogenesis, its clinical assessment and its management and it is an opportune tome for the practicing clinician unlike no other that I am aware of currently in the field. We forget the social and economic impact of this disorder particularly in high prevalence areas where it is responsible for over 70000 hospital admissions in the USA alone. The true impact of the condition is poorly understood because we often do not take into account the effect of recurrence and because we also have no real data pertaining to its bearing on health-related quality of life. The scientific interpretation of data pertaining to pilonidal sinus management is also difficult owing to the variations in the surgical treatments, the different blinding of studies, differences in surgical techniques, variations in the use of different drains and suture materials and the variability in and adequacy of follow-up. Further, in published work, it is also often difficult to differentiate between failure and recurrence. Successful surgical treatment of pilonidal disease requires adequate excision of the sinus and underlying hair 'nests' with controversy over the best method of covering the resulting defect. The results of off mid-line flap closure appear far superior with excellent results from the Limberg flap although in recent years there has been a trend based on initially good results and the ability for simple repetition of minimalist procedures such as the trephine procedure, pit picking and now even endoscopic sinus ablation, each of which is discussed in this book. More complex flap procedures are reserved for multiply recurrent and bilateral disease but they are disappearing operations. For me, this is a gem of a book. It provided me with an update of the pathophysiology of the disease, reminding me of the historical literature and it rendered a clear perspective for the management of my patients. I heartily recommend this book written by an accomplished surgeon who displays affection for his patients and a mastery of his craft.

Review provided by Andrew Zbar MD (Lond) MBBS FRCS (Ed) FRACS FSICCR (Hon), Professor of Surgery, Chaim Sheba Medical Center Israel