

Benign focal epilepsies in infancy, childhood and adolescence.

by N. Fejerman and R.H Caraballo
John Libbey Eurotext, 2007, 266 p.

This book is devoted to the description of benign focal epilepsies in the young. As Prof. Jean Aicardi emphasizes in his preface to the volume, the concept, born from the spirit of observation typical of the French epileptological school, has become, over the years, one of the most interesting topics in epileptology. This is due not only to its clinical and electrophysiological peculiarities, but also to the cultural contribution to developing discussion on epileptic syndromes.

Most of the book represents the fruits of the historical collaboration and friendship between the senior authors and some Italian research groups, whereas other aspects such as genetic are tackled by outstanding international experts.

The book is divided into five parts: the first introduces the readers to the nosological and syndromic aspects, including the neurophysiological concept of cortical hyperexcitability. The second, third and fourth parts are

devoted to an exhaustive phenotypical description of the different forms of epilepsy in infancy, childhood and adolescence, in particular the most common syndromes such as benign childhood epilepsy with centrotemporal spikes and the occipital (early onset and late onset) forms. These chapters are characterized by their practical slant, with an extremely clear description of the clinical and neurophysiological features, and the particular care given to the syndromic evolution and the sometimes difficult, differential diagnosis. The clear electrographic description of the different situations is one of the book's strong points.

The last part of the book addresses a discussion by the World's leading experts on the emerging aspects of inheritance and epilepsy.

The book is well designed, the figures are clear and it is easy to read. As expected, the volume has all the qualities to remain a key reference work in the field.

Paolo Tinuper

Department of Neurological Sciences
University of Bologna
Italy