

BUCHBESPRECHUNGEN / BOOK REVIEWS

J.C. Türp, C. Sommer, A. Hugger (eds.)

**Pain and Headache – The Puzzle of Orofacial Pain**

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J.C. Türp, C. Sommer and A. Hugger present this volume on orofacial pain as part of a comprehensive series on pain and headache. In so doing, they have brought together a number of leading researchers and clinicians in the field.

The first section is dedicated to basic research. Three chapters deal with the specific physiology of muscle and joint pain, and the potential therapeutic consequences. The following chapter on the role of reproductive hormones in orofacial pain shows that we are close to finding an answer to the question why women are over-represented among pain patients. The neurophysiological background of orofacial pain is discussed in this section's last chapter, elucidating basic concepts such as the peripheral and central sensitization so important for understanding any chronic pain condition.

The second section deals with the specific clinical entities of orofacial pain, comprising chapters on dental pain, painful myogenous and arthrogenous temporomandibular disorders, neuropathic and idiopathic facial pain and burning-mouth syndrome. This section concludes with a chapter on the psychosocial impact of orofacial pain, providing an overview of the enormous progress achieved in this field over the last two decades. While traditional, mechanistic concepts of etiology, diagnosis and the therapy of orofacial pain continue to predominate in first-line dentistry, the reader learns in this text about the "biopsychosocial" model of pain, coming to a better understanding of the complex interactions of physical lesions and of how neuro-logical, psychological, and social pain is processed.

The third section is dedicated to the historic evolution of approaches to orofacial pain, and its classification and future developments, e.g. the use of genetic methods to assess risk factors and tailor-made therapeutic concepts.

While some of the authors are basic researchers exclusively, most of the others seem to come more or less from the pain scene, irrespective of their medical or dental training. The authors maintain that orofacial pain is generally a medical, not a specific dental problem, an approach reflected in the terminology used in discussing the diagnostic and therapeutic principles. Another concept shared by all authors seems to be their adherence to evidence-based medicine.

Unlike many other books by several authors, this one comes across as a well-conceived textbook. While a precise step-by-step description of clinical procedures is not within these editors' scope, they provide an excellent overview ranging from basic science to fundamental questions on the clinical management of orofacial pain. All in all, this volume is worthwhile investment, and all those interested in the rapidly-evolving field of orofacial pain would be well-advised to read it.

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