

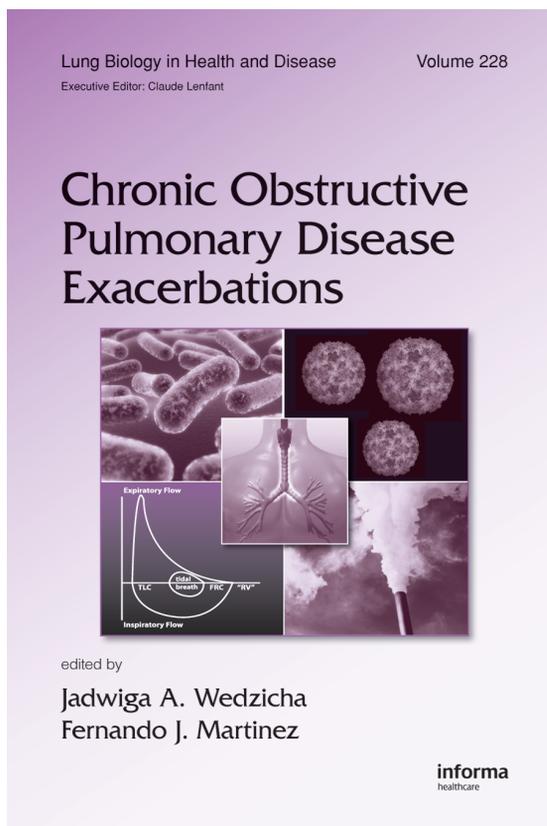
BOOK REVIEW

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Exacerbations

Edited by J.A. Wedzicha and F.J. Martinez.

Published by Informa Healthcare UK

Pages: 456. Price: £136. ISBN: 978-1420070866



Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease Exacerbations is a new publication in the Lung Biology in Health and Disease series. It deals with a very important, common and often fatal aspect of a chronic, advancing and debilitating disease. Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is the fourth leading cause of death worldwide, and it is expected to become the third leading cause by 2020.

Exacerbations affect the natural course of COPD, increase morbidity and mortality, and increase the burden of disease. Therefore, understanding the pathophysiology of exacerbations, and preventing and promptly managing them, is vital. This book provides a comprehensive and valid overview. It has been edited by J.A. Wedzicha and F.J. Martinez and the chapters have been written by leading experts within the field.

First, the book deals with definitions, clinical characteristics and differential diagnosis, describing bacterial, viral and environmental causes of exacerbations, and the mechanisms leading to the inflammatory reaction and respiratory failure. Importantly, it includes a chapter on the systemic consequences of COPD exacerbations. It then goes on to provide information and advice on the management of exacerbations, including pharmacotherapy and oxygen therapy, and includes chapters on noninvasive ventilation support and invasive ventilation and weaning. There are also chapters concerning comorbidities, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, end-of life issues, and risk factors for severe exacerbations and hospital admission.

Last but not least, the book includes a chapter on the methods by which exacerbations can be prevented, such as smoking cessation, vaccines, pharmacotherapy, long-term oxygen therapy and treatment of comorbidities; there is also a chapter concerning future research areas and clinical study design. The latter is particularly important as the authors describe potential problems and flaws in study design and highlight the important areas in current and future research.

Overall, the book includes 37 chapters; most chapters are very enjoyable to read and, on the whole, it is a valuable book with up-to-date information and references, solid scientific background and good practical advice. It provides less experienced clinicians with a comprehensive overview and I think that it covers, in depth and with many references, any issue that may be raised by specialist pulmonologists, as well as scientists working in the field. I believe that it can help better our understanding and lead to improved management and research.

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