
Book Review

By Larry McGrath, RRT

Fundamentals of Mechanical Ventilation, a new book by Robert Chatburn, RRT, FAARC, helps readers understand how mechanical ventilators work. This text fills the void left by texts that focus either on the clinical application of ventilators or almost entirely on ventilator specifications.

While many texts focus on the clinical application of ventilation with a brief overview of the ventilators themselves, this book shows the reader how to choose modes and understand how they work and how to monitor a machine's performance and a patient's condition. This enables practitioners to incorporate the equipment side of the patient-ventilator system into their assessments of and care of their patients.

Chatburn, director of respiratory care at University Hospitals of Cleveland and associate professor of pediatrics at Case Western Reserve University, wrote this text to appeal to a wide range of practitioners, including all levels of clinical professionals involved in mechanical ventilation. Readers can use this text at a basic level to help a vent-dependent patient or home care nurse understand the basics of ventilation, at an applicable level as a comprehensive text for respiratory therapists, physicians and nurses responsible for critical care, or at a "mastery" level essential for instructors and clinical managers.

This text:

- Defines jargon,
- Provides understanding at three levels: basic, comprehensive and expert,
- Covers ventilator design and how to understand and select modes,
- Offers complete coverage of graphic display interpretation including waveforms and loops,
- Includes accurate waveform illustrations based on mathematical models,
- Includes review questions throughout the text to help you assess your knowledge,
- Asks self-assessment questions at the ends of chapters, with answer key included, and
- Provides a complete glossary of terms.

The chapter on waveform analysis (98 pages) is particularly well written and comprehensive. The "Review and Consider" questions the author uses periodically through the chapters are excellent and enable the readers to evaluate their understanding of the concepts presented before proceeding to the next topic.

I strongly recommend this text for educators, students and practicing professionals. It is an excellent reference book for any respiratory department. Chatburn also released a text *Handbook for Healthcare Research* earlier this year by the same publisher.

This book is available from Mandu Press LTD, P.O. Box 18284, Cleveland Heights OH 44118 or call (888) 511-2452. Cost is, \$59.95. ISBN: 097294382X.

Larry McGrath is a New York practitioner.

Fundamentals of Mechanical Ventilation

By Robert L. Chatburn
