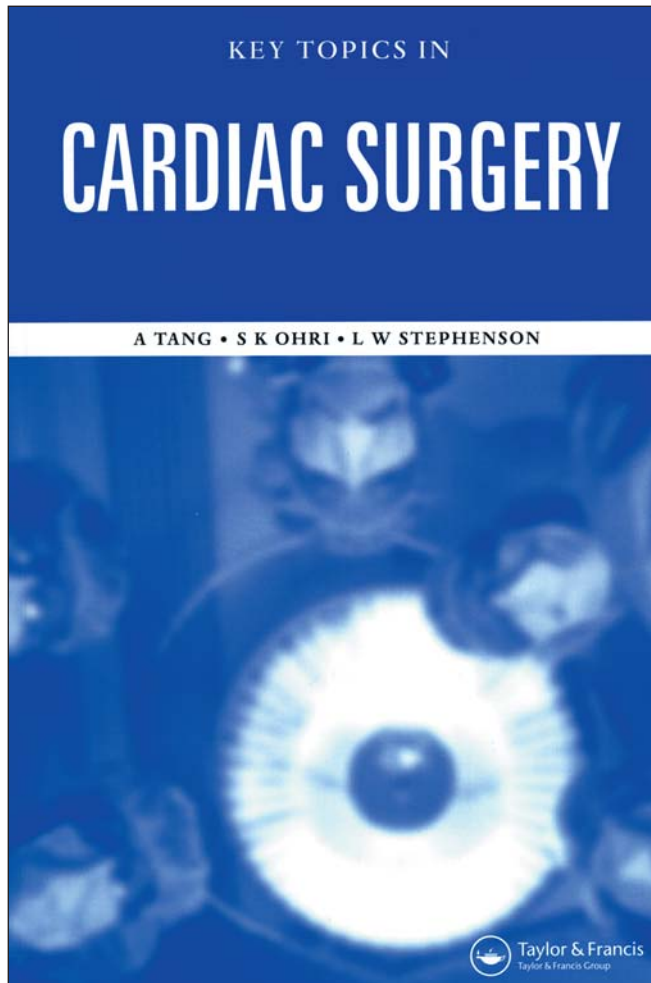


Key topics in cardiac surgery



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This book is made up of three parts: the fundamentals, adult cardiac surgery and paediatric cardiac surgery. It provides essential information in an update of the developments in heart surgery.

In the first part cardiac surgical anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, cardiac imaging and echocardiography are presented. But also subjects such as cardio-

pulmonary bypass, myocardial protection, blood conservation, cardioanaesthesia, preoperative and postoperative care and even risk stratification are discussed. The second part includes, besides topics as surgery for ischaemic heart and heart valve disease, also aortic surgery, interventions for atrial fibrillation, cardiac tumours, pericardial disease, trauma, heart failure, transplantation and pulmonary thrombo-endarterectomy. In the last part, paediatric surgery from ASD to total anomalous pulmonary venous connection and a discussion on palliation versus correction of congenital heart defects is presented.

All this information is summarised in a handy book with 330 pages. All topics are limited to two to four pages. The typeface and page layout invite reading, the figures are simple and clarifying, and each chapter ends with a proposal for further reading and citation of related topics of interest. The authors must be congratulated not only on this rigorous set-up but also on the quality of the subjects, all presented by recognised experts. This strong point however is also the weakest point of the book. It is difficult to summarise, for example, thousands of articles concerning myocardial protection or to discuss risk stratification and performance monitoring in two pages. The proposals for further reading do invite the reader to go into the subject more deeply. However, the rapid evolution in surgical and cardiological techniques, monitoring, anaesthesia, postoperative care, in fact in all fields related to cardiac surgery and the impact of health care as a whole on cardiac surgery, makes it difficult to provide really up-to-date references. This point, however, is a problem for any textbook on an evolving subject as cardiac surgery.

A crucial question for every publisher is who will buy this book? The book is claimed to be aimed primarily at trainees in cardiac surgery who are preparing for board/speciality exit examinations. To be honest, the book seems to me to be too superficial for this group. On the other hand, for those in allied disciplines as cardiology, cardiac anaesthesiology, intensive care, nursing, perfusion, physiotherapy and even students this book is an excellent starter for further study of a specific subject. ■

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