

Women and pressure

Dear Editor,

We welcomed the comment in the review by Janet Watterson and Michael Standen that overall our book, *Women and pressure: diving and altitude*, was an enjoyable read.¹ However, of concern to the editors were the remarks relating to the lack of definitive answers regarding issues of gender, menstrual cycle, and pregnancy in relation to diving. The editors had hoped that the reader would appreciate the paucity of high-level science in these areas, but would gain an informed understanding of the limited peer-reviewed literature and the limitations of such studies, as recognised in other reviews of this book. It is regrettable that until such time as the obstacles of funding and manpower to study a minority cohort can be overcome, then the studies that do exist, as summarised in the book, will remain the basis to inform the diving and aviation industry.

The reviewers also dwelt on the problems involving indexing, which were due to errors at the printers and outside the editors' control. However, the editors would like to take this opportunity to announce, with pleasure, that a second, corrected limited edition is now published. This edition is in full colour with the appropriate paper quality, 400 pages, CD, and available from Best Publishing, price US \$49.99. As before, all royalties will be used by the Diving Diseases Research Centre in Plymouth, England, to support further diving research.

Reference

- 1 Watterson J. Book review. Women and pressure: diving and altitude. *Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine*. 2010;40:164-5.

Caroline Fife and Marguerite St Leger Dowse
E-mail: <cfife@intellicure.com>
<marguerite@mstld.co.uk>

Reply

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the authors' concerns about our review of their book, *Women and pressure: diving and altitude*. I am very pleased to hear that an accurately indexed edition, in full colour, is going to be available for a very reasonable price.

I stand by my comments regarding the lack of clarity about diving in pregnancy, which was seen as a deficiency. A chapter devoted to this issue with a human and clinical input could have been included. The chapters mentioning pregnancy in the text are about esoteric research on sheep or buried in a chapter about women's health in general. I accept that the research is inconclusive; however, the use

of hyperbaric oxygen in some countries during pregnancy is not even mentioned and would have been an interesting addition. I believe that a text such as this should have made it easier for a clinician or diver to at least partially answer the question "have I harmed my baby by diving during pregnancy?"

Dr Janet Watterson, MBBS(hons), FRACGP, DRANZCOG, MFM, FARGP
Pambula Medical Centre
NSW 2549
Australia

Editor's comment

The two other book reviews mentioned by Dr Fife and Ms St Leger Dowse were both by well-known, long-standing diving 'experts', John Bevan and Karl Schreeves, neither of whom are medically qualified. I invited Dr Watterson to review this book because she reflects exactly an important part of the audience this book appeared to be aimed at – a younger generation than Bevan (or myself), a busy family doctor (and mother) with a diving medicine component to her practice, who has undergone basic training in diving medicine and is herself a keen diver. Added to that, her husband is a dive centre operator/diving instructor.

I hope, therefore, that the authors will not discount their comments in considering future editions of this useful addition to the diving medicine library.

Michael Davis, Editor

Key words

Women, diving, scuba diving, health, physiology, pregnancy, risk factors, letters (to the Editor)
