This comprehensive reference book on flight nursing has been conceived and conceptualised by The Air and Surface Transport Nurses Association with the aim of providing information pertinent to the practice of flight nursing. The scope of the book encompasses the information needs of all the personnel who play a key role in patient transport viz. the paramedics, nurses, physicians, respiratory therapists, pilots, mechanics and the communication specialists.

The book has thirty seven chapters grouped into nine units. In the first unit the history of patient transport starting from the medieval times to the current era is described. The key transport team members are identified and their roles are delineated. The patient transport related certification, research and quality management issues are discussed.

The general principles of practice of patient transportation are discussed in the next unit. The physiology of transport is described comprehensively. The difficulties in casualty extrication from the scene of event such as vehicular accident, aircraft crash, hazardous material accidents, police related emergencies etc. are described. A complete chapter is dedicated to disaster management in terms of the response plan, common problems, triage principles etc. Communication, an important requirement of airborne resuscitation team, is discussed in terms of the equipment used and standard protocols followed.

The third unit focuses on the principles of in-flight patient care. The safety and survival issues of vital importance for resuscitation team are elaborately brought out. The clinical techniques of patient assessment prior to transportation, of utmost importance in determining the transportation safety and medical needs, are explained. The practical tips for preparation of the patient for transport, described in the book as ‘packaging the patient’, are lucid and comprehensive. The principles of vital sign management i.e. the airway management and treatment of shock are addressed.

The next four units discuss specific clinical issues. Transportation of trauma patients describes the general principles of trauma management and discusses in details neurological, thoracic, abdominal, orthopaedic traumas and burns. The principles of carriage of patients with medical emergencies of neurologic, cardiovascular, pulmonary and abdominal nature are elaborately covered. Environmental emergencies including infectious diseases, heat/cold injuries, diving injuries and poisonings are dealt with in a separate unit. The issues related to transportation of special patients such as pregnant ladies, neonates and children are also focussed upon in a separate chapter.

The legal pitfalls and ethical issues in air transportation along with the care of family of the patient being transported are touched upon. The last unit deals with methods to market the transportation program.

The book satisfactorily achieves its stated aim of being a complete reference to practitioners of patients’ air transportation. The comprehensive coverage of the issue of air transport is of immense value to the armed forces, which routinely carry out casualty evacuation. The book would serve as a good reference to emergency medicine practitioners, aviation medicine specialists and all
clinicians concerned about safe transportation of their patient to more specialised tertiary care centre. The information covered in the book is also of immense value to disaster management planners, air ambulance operators and commercial airlines that undertake sick passengers’ transportation. The book is recommended as a reference for all medical personnel concerned with transportation of patients.

Contributed by:
Wg Cdr VV Joshi
Classified Specialist & Professor
(Aviation Medicine)
Institute of Aerospace Medicine, Bangalore