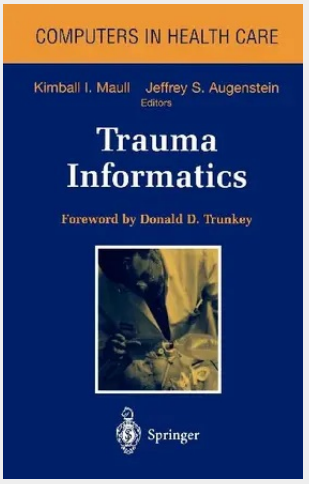
Maull / Augenstein

Trauma Informatics



Information and the technology to rapidly transmit, analyze, document, and disperse this information are increasing arithmetically, if not logarithmi cally. Arguably, no discipline better exemplifies this trend than medicine. It can be further argued that care of the trauma patient is one of the better examples of informatics and the potential benefit to the health profession als who care for these patients. Maull and Augenstein have provided us with a primer on informatics and its use in trauma care. The subject matter is timely and covers the gamut of trauma care from prehospital to rehabilitation. Who will benefit from trauma informatics? A simple answer would be anyone who takes care of trauma patients. From a broader perspective, however, at least three examples illustrate how trauma informatics can be used today to exert a positive effect on patient outcome. The first example is care of combat casualties, including battlefield resuscitation, evacuation, acute care, and ultimate return to the continental United States. Current technology is such that via global positioning satellite, a corpsman could transmit to a remote area the vital signs and pertinent physical findings of a combat casualty. Furthermore, the location of the corpsman and the casu alty would be precisely known, and consultation and destination disposition would be possible. The injured person, when admitted to a combat support hospital, could be continuously monitored and additional remote consulta tion obtained.

The three phases of trauma care (pre-hospital; hospital; and post- acute/rehabilitation) are based upon a philisophy of a continuum of care, which in turn necessitates a continuum of information. Trauma Informatics will be the first book to cover the subject of information systems in the treatment of trauma patients through the three phases of trauma. As the book covers Trauma from incident through return to work, any of the providers, managers, and support staff who are involved in using, collecting or managing information will benefit from this comprehensive approach to trauma informatics.

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