

**Oxford Textbook of Clinical Nephrology (3rd edn)**

Edited by Alex MA Davison, J Stewart Cameron, Jean-Pierre Grunfeld, Claudio Ponticelli, Charles Van Ypersele, Eberhard Ritz, Christopher Winearls  
 Oxford University Press 2005  
 Price £395.00. Pp 3042  
 ISBN 0 19 850824 7

The *Oxford Textbook of Clinical Nephrology* is a core text for nephrologists and this third edition is no exception. With its international authorship and editorial panel this book represents the up-to-date opinion and evidence base of medicine for the renal patient. Each chapter is written by a different author so writing styles vary,

but the layout of each chapter is similar including epidemiology, clinical features, laboratory results, pathological findings, treatment options and often finishing with a discussion or a concluding paragraph. As would be expected every chapter is extensively referenced.

This book also highlights the importance of the allied hospital specialities to renal medicine with pathology, paediatrics and radiological diagnosis and intervention well illustrated and dispersed throughout most chapters. The quality of the illustrations



has moved with the times and are improved compared to previous editions. They are still not liberally dispersed and tables and flow diagrams could be increased in number. This edition has also moved with the changing population now seen in nephrology with chapters discussing the care of the elderly patient and palliative care within renal

medicine. This is an excellent reference text for all nephrologists and a must for every medical library.

*Helen Campbell, Leeds NHS Teaching Hospital Trust, Leeds*

**Case-Based Haematology**

Shaun McCann, Robin Foa, Owen Smith, Eibhlin Conneally  
 Blackwell Publishing 2004  
 Price £16.95. Pp 180  
 ISBN 1405113219

*Case-Based Haematology* sets out to cover a variety of key topics in haematology in a manner relevant to medical students and junior doctors alike. My initial reaction was that this is an ambitious, perhaps unachievable task. However, the authors' approach works very well when you start to read individual cases.

The book contains 20 cases that cover key areas of general and malignant haematology. Each case is presented in the same manner which helped to develop a logical thought process and reduce the temptation to jump towards a diagnosis without considering the diagnostic steps.

This process is perhaps best illustrated by picking a case from the book. 'A farmer with a broken rib' offers a brief initial history suggesting that more than simple trauma may be involved. By posing a question and then providing a clear answer directly beneath the reader is lead from the GP's initial investigations through acute admission and into the interpretation of basic haematological and biochemical profiles. Differentials are discussed and then discarded on the basis of sound argument and results. As the diagnosis of myeloma emerges the questions become more demanding and cover the monoclonal nature of the disease and the importance of immunoparesis. A photomicrograph of a bone marrow aspirate showing excess

plasma cells precedes the development of a diagnostic algorithm for investigation of a paraproteinaemia.

Other cases cover common problems such as haemolytic anaemia, thrombocytopenia and the haematological complications of coeliac disease. I particularly appreciated the final case which looks at blood transfusion with a particular focus on blood and blood product safety.

This book will help medical students to approach a clinical problem logically. If you take the style used on board then your answers in a viva will improve. As a junior doctor it provides enough information to cover haematology in day-to-day practice and membership exams. Haematologists may not learn anything new – but I suspect I shall refer back to this book next time I am asked to teach juniors or laboratory staff.

*James Bailey, St James's University Hospital, Leeds*

**The Year in Neurology 2004**

Edited by Edward Faught  
 Clinical Publishing 2004  
 Price £59.99. Pp 338  
 ISBN 1 904392 22 9

This slim volume is fun, informative and educational. Professor Faught has assembled an impressive professorial authorship who have selected papers which have made a recent impact on their area of neurology. Each chapter is a collection of papers written in a 'journal update' style covering the basic sciences and clinical diagnosis, treatment and novel emerging therapies. Each paper is summarized by the author followed by a one-sentence interpretation.

A short commentary puts each paper in the context of current understanding. The chapters are tied together with an introduction and conclusion. Each chapter is short and can be read in isolation without difficulty. Navigation is made easier with clear formatting, and indexes of both terms and the papers reviewed. Additional reading is provided with each chapter.

The advantage of this volume is that it brings together a breadth of current information distilled by experts in the field over a whole year. This makes reading more widely than one is normally able to a pleasure because individual papers are not read in isolation. I certainly learnt a great deal in subject areas that I would not normally tackle.

As with all selective books there are some problems. *The Year in Neurology 2004* actually summarizes the literature for an 18-month period crossing 2002 and 2003 and so some of the information is out of date; natalizumab, 'eagerly awaited after phase II trials', has been licensed, used and (at least temporarily) withdrawn because of safety concerns. The range of topics covered is impressive and includes many, but not all, the major sub-specialities. Future years will cover complementary topics.

Although aimed at general neurologists, both qualified and in training, and general physicians with an interest in neurology, this book would also appeal to those looking for a new direction in medicine or scientists wishing to keep abreast of clinical development.

*Michael Lunn, National Hospital for Neurology, London*