

Textbook of Pleural Diseases (2nd edn)

Edited by Richard W Light and YC Gary Lee

Hodder Arnold 2008

Price £149.00. Pp 650

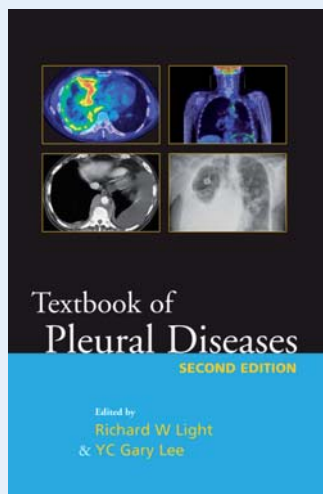
ISBN 978 034094 017 4

This is a clearly presented multi-author textbook of pleural disease, consisting of an initial 15 chapters on basic science, and 35 clinical chapters. I felt that the basic science section could have been more succinct, but each chapter ends with a bullet point summary, so one can quickly skim through to points of clinical relevance.

The clinical section contains several gems: chapter 26 gives a detailed account of the theoretical and clinical aspects of empyema (although it suffers from the

failure to label figure 26.2); chapter 27 gives a good account of the natural history of tuberculous empyema; and chapter 29 gives a pithy account of the management of chylothorax.

One could argue that there was some redundancy in the otherwise useful chapters on radiological investigations, in that ultrasound examination was dealt with twice, once in conjunction with other investigations, and then considered in isolation, but it is difficult to regard this as a fault, given the increasing importance of involving respiratory physicians in ultrasound



examination. Chapter 39 on an ordered approach to undiagnosed pleural effusions should be mandatory reading for trainees in respiratory medicine.

Chapters 47 and 48 contained some contradictory views on the role of medical thoracoscopy in the management of primary pneumothorax, but this simply reflects different schools of thought. This book offers an encyclopaedic coverage of pleural disease, and should find a place in every respiratory department.

James Finnerty, Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Chester

So you want to be a Medical Mum?

Emma Hill

Oxford University Press 2008

Price £10.95. Pp 223

ISBN 978 0 19 923758 6

This book is the first book which has been published addressing the issues of combining motherhood with a medical career. It provides a good guide to many questions related to maternity pay, leave entitlement and the options available to you afterwards for both childcare and working patterns. While most of this information is available to you elsewhere, this book saves time and thus anxiety by providing all pertinent information in one place.

Each chapter contains the text, quotes from other medical mums and summary boxes. Although it has a fairly no-nonsense approach the format took a little getting used to as the three sections are all in different type settings. This sometimes meant I had to reread bits as the actual thread of the chapter had got lost.

My main criticism of the book is the sheer number of quotes included, particularly as the last 3 pages are entirely quotes! The author felt that medical mums 'are an untapped resource' and although it is interesting to read about other medical mum's experiences I couldn't quite see the relevance of including so many as everyone's situation is different, particularly in light of the changing working practice

with Medical Training Application Service and the European Working Time Directive.

I am also concerned that this book may quickly go out of date as it contains a large number of facts and figures related to pay and benefit that will be subject to change.

Overall this is a useful resource with a good reference list of websites and contacts. It will be of interest to an increasing number of medical students and doctors and although I am not sure I would advise you to buy a copy I would definitely recommend borrowing it from the library.

Fiona Lyon, York Hospital, York

Oxford Handbook of Paediatrics

Edited by Robert C Tasker,

Robert J McClure, Carlo L Acerini

Oxford University Press 2008

Price £24.95. Pp 1043

ISBN 978 0 19 856573 4

I was pleased to find that paediatrics finally merits a handbook in its own right, having previously had just a small section within the *Oxford Handbook of Clinical Specialties*. Quick reference guides are invaluable when starting out and I clearly recall feeling lost without an Oxford handbook in my first paediatric post.

This handbook is easy to read, well structured and covers the whole spectrum of the various subspecialties. Of note for inexperienced trainees are the pages suggesting differential diagnoses for common

presentations, e.g. cough, wheeze, limping. The brief summaries of more complex topics would also be useful to those further on in training.

I was surprised to find the section on consent consigned to the last pages of the book. It is important for doctors to appreciate the differences in working with children before even taking a history for the first time. It was disappointing to see routine chest X-ray and bronchodilators included as standard management for bronchiolitis as this is not evidence based or current practice where I have worked.

However, my main concerns lie with the minimal mention of existing national guidance for key areas of practice, e.g. British Thoracic Society guidance on asthma or National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance on urinary tract infection. Also, several of the emergency sections differ from current advanced paediatric life support algorithms, which has the potential to cause confusion among juniors. The section on fever does link in very well to National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence guidance and was easier to follow than the official summary.

I would recommend this book to students and doctors new to paediatrics, but they should discuss with senior colleagues before following the suggested management plans.

Kim Neuling, Heart of England NHS Foundation Trust, Birmingham