

Principles of Airway Management (4th edn)

Brendan T Finucane, Ban CH Tsui, Albert H Santora
Springer-Verlag 2011
Price £62.99. Pp 766
ISBN 978 0 387 09557 8

The previous edition of the *Principles of Airway Management*, published in 2003 and written by Brendan Finucane and Albert Santora, was an excellent reference text. For this fourth edition Ban Tsui was recruited and each chapter was revised, updated and expanded.

Reorganization of the content has improved the flow.



The figures are improved by the addition of colour, and many illustrations have been added. With 239 more pages than the third edition this is a volume of biblical proportions. New chapters on extubation strategies and advanced airway devices have contributed to this.

It is difficult to fault this volume. However, it predominantly describes Canadian and North American practice. This is most evident in the chapters on the difficult airway and extubation strategies which include American Society of Anesthesiologists algorithms that are more complex than those of the UK Difficult Airway Society. Guidance

on the use of the laryngeal mask airway is also slightly more conservative than accepted practice in the UK.

This book is written well, richly illustrated, thoroughly referenced and easy to read. The authors give clear, evidence-based reasoning for their recommendations. Lists, boxes, tables, flow charts and illustrations are used effectively. It provides a sound knowledge base that supports the recommendations from the fourth national audit project and the ADEPT guidelines on airway device purchasing from the UK Difficult Airway Society.

This concise and comprehensive review will be useful for all medical and paramedical health-care professionals who have to manage the airway.

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Oxford Handbooks Clinical Tutor Study Cards: Surgery

Edited by Tanya M Monaghan, James D Thomas, David J Humes
Oxford University Press 2011
Price £19.95
ISBN 978 0 19 960642 9

This colour-coordinated pack of 132 surgical study cards, directed at final year medical students, would be a great addition to any revision schedule. Its logical division into different surgical sub-specialities allows readers to pick a particular topic, place the cards in the provided plastic pocket and revise anywhere without the burden of a large textbook.

The front page of the index cards covers examination techniques and common examination findings, while the back is divided into 'the essentials', 'the extras' and 'showing off'. There is no real consistency about what is covered in the essentials and the extras. The usual subjects such as differential diagnosis, investigations, treatment and management can be part of either section, which are actually fundamental; this could give a false impression to students that what is covered in the essentials is enough. Eponymous syndromes, genetic and historical components are generally rightly demonstrated in the showing off sections.

The concise illustrations on how to describe a skin lesion is perfect for those less exposed to dermatology which can be lacking in the undergraduate curriculum.

These cards provide a good start to surgical revision and can act as a good prompt to last-minute cramming but, like any condensed revision help, they should not be used as the only study tool.

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Practical and Professional Clinical Skills

Edited by Vinod Patel and John Morrissey
Oxford University Press 2011
Price £29.99. Pp 616
ISBN 978 0 19 958561 8

The simple design of this clinical skills manual will help students and doctors alike to assess their development in the often daunting methods of clinical practice. The authors base the skills on the fundamental principles of *Tomorrow's Doctors*, ensuring relevance to current practice. The focus is on 'skill acquisition' with a system of scoring that reflects the modern medical school's current assessment style.

Unit 1-4 summarizes history and examination skills in a coherent manner. This is where this text excels, for it incorporates not only practical but professional skills of enquiry. The history taking section breaks the process skills down into biomedical and patient aspects, emphasizing this distinction in practice. Where the authors do not expand, they refer to supporting material. Their scientific approach will be well received by students, although other

health-care professionals may struggle if they do not have a scientific background. An attribute that sets this text apart is that each skill is put into context emphasizing, for example, that a history taken in a GP setting requires a modified method to that of an emergency department setting. This will be particularly useful for students or doctors on rotation as a new setting can unsettle one's cues.

Unit 2-4 provides a concise methodology of systems examination with an excellent emphasis on patient comfort including bullet-pointed 'safety tips'. Occasionally colour photos are lacking, for example in a picture of a jaundiced patient, but on the whole they are supportive. There are useful aide-memoires such as illustrations, among nuggets of interesting background knowledge to impress examiners with. Each system is covered individually, but a common structure allows for continuity of learning. This step-wise approach helps consolidate learning with support of the tick-box formative assessment. The pelvic examination section is dealt with particularly sensitively with in-depth anatomy related specifically to the sequence of examination.

Overall this is an inspiring text which offers an instructive approach to clinical skills by providing a means to monitor progress. At £29.99, it is also affordable, making it an attractive option for students.
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