

Anaesthesia, Intensive Care, and Pain Management for the Cancer Patient

Edited by Paul Farquhar-Smith and Tim Wigmore

Oxford University Press 2011

Price £49.99. Pp 258

ISBN 978 0 19 958464 2

This is a comprehensive book aimed at anaesthetists who care for patients with malignant disease, and as the title suggests, it encompasses aspects of anaesthesia, pain management and intensive care. At a time when developments in the field of cancer are rapidly evolving and clinicians more and more frequently find themselves looking after patients with malignancies, a succinct and relevant text is invaluable.



The book is just over 250 pages and each chapter is written in an easy-to-read style. The first part concentrates on haematological malignancies along with a refresher on basic cancer biology and some of the therapeutic interventions. The main body of the book is in part 2 where the focus is on specific surgical specialities. This comprises pragmatic details and advice for major surgery such as oesophagectomies and head and neck dissections, and practical ways in which the anaesthetist can avoid complications. There is also an informative chapter on paediatric oncology which is a valuable reference for both paediatric and non-paediatric anaesthetists.

Part 3 discusses aspects of intensive care management.

There is a revealing chapter exploring how medical interventions may influence and modify cancer growth as well as a review of the ethical issues surrounding cancer patients within a critical care environment. The final part of the book focuses on the challenges of pain, with advice for individualizing patients' acute and chronic management.

The main contributors to this book are anaesthetists who have experience working at one of the major specialist cancer centres in the UK, the Royal Marsden. This gives rise to a credible and practical guide. There are very few sources within the literature addressing this expanding field and this book provides an excellent overview of perioperative care for cancer patients.

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The Consultant Interview

Sara Watkin, Andrew Vincent

Oxford University Press 2012

Price £24.99. Pp 281

ISBN 978 0 19 959480 1

This book is an easy-to-read but comprehensive guide for anyone embarking on the search for a consultant post in the NHS.

Reading the chapters sequentially gives a thorough and practical step-by-step guide on how to maximize your chance of securing a consultant post. It starts with general advice on how to successfully position yourself for a future post in your chosen field, and gives some valuable insights into the employer's perspective which can be forgotten in the usual pre-interview panic.

There is an excellent section on how to compose the best CV possible and on completing the NHS jobs application, with practical tips for even the most IT challenged candidates. It highlights the importance of the pre-interview visit, explores the psychology of the panel and candidates, and explains psychometric testing.

The material on how to prepare for the actual interview explores potential questions, how to structure answers, practicing your responses, pitfalls to avoid and how to deliver a presentation.

The reader is taken through what happens on the day in helpful detail – useful for the first time candidate. Along with a large bank of interview questions, including spe-

cialty-specific topics, there is a list of NHS resources to research the current issues.

The layout of this book makes it easy to digest and it appropriately highlights key points and useful tips in separate 'boxes'; the authors even direct the last minute candidate to the most relevant chapters. I recommend this book for anyone in specialist training as a starting point to planning your career progression. It will be even more useful to the doctor approaching completion of training and actively searching for a job. It also provides valuable insight to the locum consultant who is looking for the ideal substantive post and wants to present him-/herself in the best possible light for future employers.

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Skin Diseases in the Elderly: A Colour Handbook

Colby Craig Evans, Whitney A High Manson 2012

Price £29.95. Pp 136

ISBN 978 1 84076 154 2

This title represents a good, basic, cheap, comprehensive, illustrated textbook of dermatology for the student, internist or GP. The problem is that it does not seem to be about skin diseases in the elderly as specifically billed. Some general, common-place, self-evident remarks are made about the skin of senior citizens in the preface and

part 1 (five pages in total) but the rest of the book is a workmanlike account of general dermatology. A number of similar texts is readily available elsewhere.

Some diseases are included that shouldn't really be there, not being particularly common or important in older people, e.g. lupus erythematosus, systemic sclerosis, polymorphous [sic] light eruption, erythema nodosum. In the separate accounts of many of the different conditions no real attempt has been made to emphasize the particular manifestations, consequences or therapeutic considerations that pertain to its occurrence in an older patient.

Much more could have been made of the real problems that geriatric dermatology presents to the physician, e.g. drug eruptions and leg ulcers, and the challenges of holistic care in patients with multiple comorbidities including dementia. Chronic photodamage and its complications are covered comparatively well.

A number of the pictures are patently of younger individuals. One picture has evaded careful editing and proofing: Fig 46 shows a woman (unarguably elderly, at least) with a florid malar rash with the eyes conventionally blanked out, but the caption reads 'Dry eyes of Sjögren's syndrome'. I am always dispirited to find pruritus spelt incorrectly. I am sorry to have found this book an unrewarding read.

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