

Crash Course Respiratory System (4th edn)

Sarah Hickin, James Renshaw, Rachel Williams

Mosby 2013

Price £25.99. Pp 264

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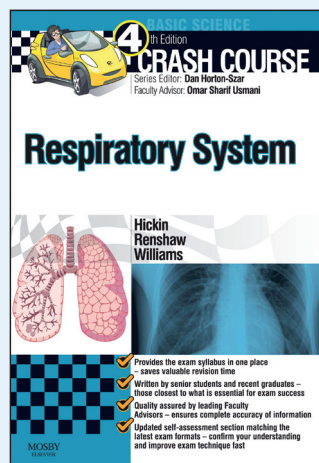
Crash Course Respiratory System (4th edn) aims to provide a concise revision text of the respiratory system for medical students of all levels. It is divided into four parts: basic science and physiology, clinical assessment, common respiratory conditions and self-assessment.

The basic science and physiology section contains the necessary information (including anatomy) for medical student exams. It does require an understanding of first principles that are not explained in the text and as a result reads as a collection of bullet points and isolated paragraphs. This makes the section more

concise and useful for quick reference, but difficult to follow.

In the second section, history, respiratory examination and common investigations are reviewed. This contains all the information a student would require for respiratory medicine in finals examination. The role of investigations is very useful with helpful radiology images and a clear explanation of pulmonary function tests.

The final chapters give an overview of common respiratory conditions from aetiology through to presentation and management. There are many useful tables for revision and 'hints and tips' and 'case studies' highlight key points.



The self-assessment section contains a combination of single best answers and extended matching questions. These provide a useful tool for finals revision with succinct but clear explanations.

Overall, this text is useful for medical students who are looking for a revision aid for respiratory medicine. It should not be used in isolation but as an adjunct for those revising for exams. The book is laid out in a logical manner making it easy for rapid review of topics as required.

Andrew Scourfield, University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, London

Essential Revision Notes for Cardiology KBA

Edited by Ali Khavandi

Oxford University Press 2014

Price £59.99. Pp 608

ISBN 978 0 19 965490 1

This medium-sized book was a pleasure to review. The whole spectrum of the cardiology syllabus is covered in a bulleted note fashion. This makes it very easy to read with the information being succinct. The chapters are bite-sized and can be easily tackled in one sitting.

I headed for those tricky areas of cardiology that strike terror into most training cardiologists, namely 'adult congenital heart disease', the 'aorta' and 'heart disease in pregnancy'; all are clearly set out with helpful diagrams and explanations. This is not only an essential read for those facing the Knowledge Based Assessment but will be a useful quick reference source for any cardiologist seeing patients that might fall outside their specialist area.

In its layout, this book reminds me of the *Lecture Notes in Clinical Medicine* that we all carried around as medical students. The main attraction to me is the clarity and the ease with which I could pick it up and find a quick refresher on a particular subject. The book is not burdened with a huge reference list but those supplied seem more than adequate. I would strongly rec-

ommend this book and will personally find it a very useful rapid source of additional information.

Simon Dubrey, Hillingdon Hospital, Uxbridge, Middlesex

Intelligent Drug Development – Trials and Errors in Clinical Research

Michael Tansey

OUP USA 2014

Price £29.99. Pp 240

ISBN 978 0 19 997458 0

In the increasingly financially-precarious world of pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, it has never been more important to maximize efficiency and effectiveness at all stages of clinical drug development. In distilling over 30 years experience in the design and conduct of pharmaceutical research, Michael Tansey has produced a concise, accessible framework for those working in drug development and clinical trials.

In combining personal experiences and well-referenced analysis of both excellence and pitfalls in the usual methods of conducting such research, the reader is presented with a holistic, cultural overview as well as a detailed step-by-step system for removing all-too-familiar barriers and hurdles that creep into clinical trials as a result of the competing interests

of sponsors, clinical research organizations, investigators and patients.

On first reading, *Intelligent Drug Development* seems overly ambitious in its desire to cut dead time and redundancies in protocol and clinical trial progress by implementing parallel workstreams to processes that are usually performed sequentially in most organizations. However, the simplicity of the notion 'why not?' is precisely the core of Tansey's method. Just because it has always been done so, does not mean it is the optimal system. Tansey cites abundant evidence from this approach in achieving remarkable reductions in lead times for protocol development, regulatory affairs and particularly for patient recruitment, which is the single longest barrier to clinical trial progress.

Furthermore, the elegance of Tansey's ideas does not rely on particular corporate structures or resources and is therefore equally applicable to academic research, start-up biotechnology companies and big pharma. This book should be mandatory reading for those new and old to any facet of clinical drug development, and could inspire even greater successes for sponsors, investigators and therefore ultimately the consumers of these efforts, our patients.

Vikas Kapil, QMUL and Barts Health NHS Trust, London