

Essentials of Clinical Immunology (4th edn)

Helen Chapel, Mansel Haeney, Siraj Misbah, Neil Snowden
Blackwell Science 1999
Price £24.95. Pp 351
ISBN 0 632 04972 3

This book lives up to its title and really does contain the essentials of clinical immunology. It is logical and clearly presented, with case studies for each disease described. The underlying pathophysiology of the disease is also presented with the associated laboratory tests and expected results. Although, for economic reasons, the book is printed in black and white, there is an associated website (<http://www.immunologyclinic.com>) containing the case studies with full-colour clinical photographs and photomicrographs where appropriate. There is also a section for updates as and when required.

I suspect that this will become a close companion to many undergraduate medical students, particularly at those medical schools offering problem-based learning to their students.

Keith E Nye, St Bartholomew's and The Royal London Hospital

Lecture Notes on Emergency Medicine (2nd edn)

Chris Moulton, David Yates
Blackwell Science 1999
Price £19.95. Pp 347
ISBN 0 632 02766 5

This book is in the 'Lecture Notes' series. In their introduction the authors state they have 'aimed to equip the reader with the knowledge to deal with crisis'. The book achieves this. The chapters are well written, easy to read and clearly set out. There are extensive cross references to other subjects within the text. The tables and illustrations are clear and add to the text content.

The book goes beyond just describing how to manage clinical problems. The associated pathophysiology of conditions is described in context and key points highlighted. The chapter on medicolegal aspects of emergency medicine is useful, clarifying issues of consent to treatment, compulsory treatment, preparation of professional witness statements and release of information to the police. The clinical content is wide ranging.

This book will be of value to medical, nursing and paramedical staff working in or on attachment to the A&E department and to military personnel undertaking hospital placements. It will also be of assistance to people instructing ATLS® and BATLS-type courses as the chapters provide additional background material.

Finally I would recommend it to people working in field hospitals and areas where help is not immediately available. Following the advice in this book will allow competent treatment to be started while more experienced staff are contacted.

PF Mahoney, Lincoln and Louth NHS Trust County Hospital

Handbook of Genitourinary Medicine

Edited by SE Barton and PE Hay
Arnold 1999
Price £45.00. Pp 277
ISBN 0 340 74084 1

It has been a pleasure to review this book which casts aside the traditional disease-orientated approach. It contains a wealth of clinical data that should act as an invaluable guide to trainees in genitourinary medicine (GUM), not only in the UK, but also in the third world. The stated aim is to produce an up-to-date and clinically based guide for the practitioner, which has mostly been achieved. In a book of its size, of course, it is impossible to cover every issue on which the health-care worker may wish guidance. The topics discussed, however, have been selected with great care and are relevant to GUM practice today.

Introductory chapters on sexual history taking and clinical examination are followed by a superb chapter on diagnostic procedures that examines the principles of the most commonly used tests, and, importantly, some pitfalls in their interpretation. With the increasing number of clinical trials in which GUM clinics are participating, inclusion of a chapter on the principles and problems of organizing such trials is welcome. This book also gives advice on establishing a new service either in an industrialized country or in the developing world.

The remainder of the book is devoted to the management of clinical problems such as genital ulceration, vaginal discharge and HIV. The liberal use of tables is helpful, and the 18 colour prints are of high quality. My only criticism is the chapter on antiretroviral therapy. The tremendous advances in

HIV therapy over the past 2 years mean that it is impossible for such a chapter to reflect current practice and, unfortunately, this is no exception. Notwithstanding that, I can wholeheartedly recommend this book to all trainee and practising specialists in GUM, irrespective of where they work.

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A Colour Handbook of Dermatology

RJG Rycroft, SJ Robertson
Manson Publishing 1999
Price £29.95. Pp 220
ISBN 1 874535 25 1

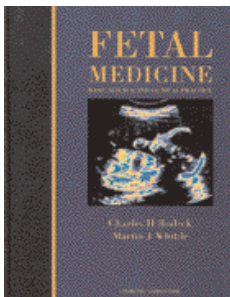
The most striking feature of this book is the superb quality of the illustrations. However, the book is far more than just another atlas of dermatology. Pictures without words are only of use in confirming one's cleverness to sceptical patients! This book achieves its goal of providing a useful and user-friendly framework for dermatological diagnosis. It is targeted at the family doctor, the trainee dermatologist and doctors from other disciplines requiring a concise guide to dermatology.

The principal features of taking a dermatological history and skin examination are covered in the introduction along with a simple, illustrated guide to morphological terms. The various diseases are laid out in a well-structured manner with a comprehensive contents list and full index. Each disease is well illustrated and accompanied by a short description of the clinical features, epidemiology, differential diagnosis and appropriate investigations. The layout assumes the reader is not starting from a point of complete ignorance. Treatment has been deliberately omitted, probably given the book a much longer shelf life.

The common dermatoses and many of the rare ones are covered with only few exceptions (such as roseola). If I had to criticize this book it would perhaps be on the coverage of the very rare. Does, for example, Kyrle-Flegel disease justify a page on its own in a book of only 220 pages?

This book does not replace standard dermatological reference books nor was it intended to. It does, however, fill a gap for the doctor who has some knowledge of dermatology and wishes to gain confidence in diagnoses. It is easy to read, small enough not to be daunting yet large enough to be worthwhile. At £29.95 it is excellent value.

John Buchan, General Practitioner, Rhayader



Fetal Medicine: Basic Science and Clinical Practice

Charles H Rodeck, Martin J Whittle
Churchill Livingstone 1999
Price £150.00. Pp 1100+
ISBN 0 443 05357 X

This new text deserves considerable recognition for the thought and process used for its construction. This UK-based editorship has utilized an international multi-author approach to cover the wide spectrum of fetal medicine from molecular biology to perinatal epidemiology and all relevant clinical material between. Rather than select a

small number of authors, they have taken a pragmatic approach to seek out the experts in each area and asked them to give a concise representation of the state of the art knowledge within their area.

As a result, the reader readily absorbs an informed text, allied to the enthusiasm of the keen clinical or scientific investigator. This approach should be applauded. There is much to admire in this textbook, which, by its size may seem daunting, with over 1100 pages. Nonetheless, there are pearls of wisdom within this book for every clinician who has an interest in fetal medicine.

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