

## **Essential Haematology (4th edn)**

AV Hoffbrand, JE Pettit, PAH Moss  
Blackwell Science 2001  
Price £19.95. Pp 349  
ISBN 0632051531

This standard medical undergraduate text is now in its fourth edition. This new edition is clearly illustrated with photomicrographs of peripheral blood films and other histological material. It also has numerous clear colour tables and figures which outline the basic pathophysiological principles of most common haematological disorders.

The authors highlight advances in molecular biology and understanding of genetics which have changed the diagnosis and treatment of most haematological disorders. Before dealing with pathological material there is a clear description of the basic biochemistry, physiology and genetics of the control of the normal haemopoetic and haemostatic systems. The book contains more information than needed for undergraduate examinations, but those areas which are not essential for first-time haematology students are clearly indicated. This makes the book suitable for senior house officers studying for further examinations, particularly MRCP, as well as for nurses working in haematology and medical laboratory scientists training in haematology departments.

The book improves considerably on previous editions and adopts a novel and stimulating educational approach to learning and practising clinical haematology. The book contains key references at the end of each section and has a useful glossary of key terms with an extensive index. Overall, this is an excellent and thorough introduction to haematology, at an affordable price in a relatively light, reinforced paperback.

As the title states, this book is essential reading for all medical students and any other health-care professionals who are involved in the diagnosis and treatment of all haematological conditions. I would recommend it unre-

servedly to all beginners in clinical and laboratory haematology.

*Samuel J Machin, Middlesex Hospital, London*

## **Essentials in Endocrinology III: Diabetes**

Stephanie Amiel, Annice Mukharjee,  
Victoria Aitken  
RSM Press 2000  
Price £95.00  
ISBN 1 85315 452 0

In contrast to the Internet or textbooks I have real problems with CD-ROMs. They are never in the right place at the right time and they cannot be rapidly updated. Multimedia technology allows provision of interactive educational material in an accessible user-friendly format, with potential for an enjoyable learning experience which promote interest in the given subject. This CD-ROM aims to do just that.

The Royal College of Physicians and Royal Society of Medicine have combined resources, using an educational grant from a pharmaceutical company, to produce this teaching aid for undergraduates and senior house officers. The price means this CD-ROM is destined for the shelves of libraries, teaching laboratories or perhaps a promotion stand.

The CD consists of five interconnected sections: a main case, mini cases, slides, text and key references. The cases are punctuated by a series of questions that are negatively marked to give you a personal score. The main case covers the diagnosis and initial management of a patient with type 2 diabetes. The mini cases cover poorly controlled type 2, a Charcot joint, necrobiosis, HONK and the DIGAMI regimen.

The cases are quite entertaining but I found them incomplete and was left wanting more in-depth discussion. Considering the target audience, however, in retrospect I took some reassurance from this. For students and those studying for postgraduate exams the CD provides an interesting, stimulating, accurate and enjoyable insight into dia-

betes. However, it may not be suitable for those aspiring to become consultants. It is not comprehensive enough to be a textbook, not accessible enough for quick reference and certainly not up to date enough. It is expensive enough to make you think twice. As educational material for junior colleagues I struggle to justify the price, but it is certainly one for the library and teaching laboratory. However, put this on the Internet, extend the cases and there would be continuing medical education for all.

*Steven Hurel, UCL Hospital, London*

## **Economic Evaluation in Health Care: Merging Theory with Practice**

Edited by Michael Drummond and  
Alistair McGuire  
Oxford University Press 2001  
Price £26.50. Pp 286  
ISBN 0192631764

This is a collection of several important, largely theoretical topics in economic evaluation. It aimed to provide a clearer understanding of the theoretical underpinning of the techniques used in economic evaluations, discussed at length in its companion text (*Methods for Economic Evaluation of Health Care Programmes*, Drummond et al).

This book will be especially useful to those who have used some of the techniques in the past, but would like a better understanding of theoretical issues and limitations. The text is well organized, starting by setting out the theoretical concepts in economic evaluations, and dealing with important issues such as outcome measures, quality of life, cost assessment, modelling, uncertainty and, finally, the transferability of results – a section that should be read by all. This is a useful additional text for any health-care researcher as it covers a wide range of theoretical issues that are fundamental in economic evaluation. It is clearly written and fairly easy to understand.

*Manouche Tavakoli, University of St Andrews*