

Dermatology: An Illustrated Colour Text (3rd edn)

David Gawkrödger
Churchill Livingstone 2002
Price £21.99. Pp 131
ISBN 0443071403

This book is chiefly aimed at the medical student or dermatological nurse. A4 in format, with a glossy plastic cover to protect it from greasy ointments, it covers the basic science of skin, terminology and definition of skin lesions and eruptions followed by beautifully laid-out chapters dealing with common skin diseases, many of which are enlivened by instructive case histories. This is done as well as I have seen in any undergraduate text.

The photographs are generally well chosen and the superb illustrations help in the understanding of disease mechanisms and histopathology. A section devoted to special topics in



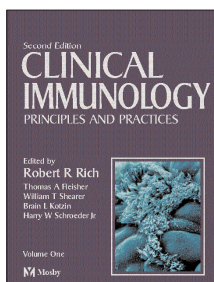
dermatology (cosmetics, skin problems in racially pigmented skin, dermatology and the internet, the skin in immunosuppression and occupational skin diseases) is a real bonus for a book of this sort. The list of patient support groups and the concise but comprehensive sections on disease management will help ensure the value of the book long beyond qualification.

My gripes are only minor – the pictures of lava migrans and erythema multiforme are not typical, and the case of occupational hand eczema in a hairdresser is incorrectly called chromate allergy. These aside, this is a cracking book, and the best of the undergraduate texts. At a little over £20, it's a bargain to boot. The content and layout alone will sell this book; expect to see it under the arms of legions of dermatology students.

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Clinical Immunology: Principles and Practice (2nd edn)

Edited by RR Rich, TA Fleisher, WT Shearer, BL Kotzin, HW Schroeder Jr
Mosby 2001
Price £250. Pp 2004
ISBN 0723431612



The advancement in medicine is best illustrated by the developments in immunology over the past 2–3 decades. Our understanding of immunology has not only helped in

our understanding of the functioning of the immune system but also in treating various immunological disorders. Immunology as a speciality justifies the need for a comprehensive textbook suitable for the immunologists and a reference book for other specialities.

This elaborate and extensive textbook in clinical immunology consists of eleven sections each covering in detail the various aspects of immunology and immunological diseases. The first section explains the principles of immunology, giving a methodical and efficient overview of the immune system. Immunological disorders relating

to various organ systems are individually and systematically dealt with extensive references. Two particularly exciting chapters which I found very interesting include gene transfer for the treatment of immunodeficiency and for immunotherapy of cancer and cytokine inhibitors. Although in the early stages gene therapy offers exciting prospects for the treatment of immunodeficiencies.

Advances in research are opening up cytokines as therapeutic options in various diseases – the best known example being tumour necrosis factor- α blockade in rheumatoid arthritis, Crohn's disease, and juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. Various cytokine-blocking strategies are discussed with suitable examples to highlight the basic concepts that underlie this treatment. In future cytokine modification will be essential for the treatment of various diseases.

Another important section in this voluminous book is the prevention of immunological diseases which deals with vaccines, immunotherapies and importantly experimental immunotherapies for autoimmune diseases which are likely to become realities in future. Certain features in this book that are impressive include the information

boxes, which present the salient aspects of the condition being discussed, as do the extensive photographic material with vivid details.

There are a few relatively minor shortcomings. Being a reference text in immunology ideally each cytokine and chemokine would be discussed on an individual basis. While the cytokines have been discussed in detail, the chemokines seem to have been discussed in an order where the reader would have difficulty in identifying individual chemokines. It would have been useful and valuable to have the complete book including the images in a full text searchable electronic format rather than the images alone that are available on the CD-ROM

The major strength of this book is its in-depth and extensive coverage of the various aspects of immunology and considering the massive undertaking that a textbook entails, there is much to praise about *Clinical Immunology: Principles and Practice*. This textbook would be of immense benefit for individuals choosing immunology as their career and an excellent reference text for those involved in all fields of medicine.

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