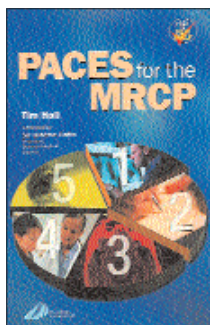


PACES for the MRCP

Tim Hall
Churchill Livingstone 2003
Price £29.99. Pp 611
ISBN 044307190X

This compact text is designed to help candidates through the clinical examination of MRCP part 2; in keeping with the format of this examination, Tim Hall has laid out this text in a mirrored fashion, and divided it into the five stations.

Each of the stations in the book goes back to basics, revising the principles of history taking and examination, and remind us of how much we fail to actually implement in our daily practice. Each of the stations is supported by case studies which reinforce the theory, and which include the pathologies frequently seen in the clinical examinations and the commonly seen problems of day-to-day clinical practice.



Station four 'communication skills and ethics', which is not covered well by other books, opens with a brief dialogue of the topic, and then launches into numerous case examples, where a problem, such as death of a relative or obtaining informed consent, is used as a tool to discuss areas of medicine in which formal training is seldom given. This section is really useful for candidates who may have concerns about their interactions with patients at a non-medical level.

This text is certainly of great value to anyone who is preparing for MRCP part 2, and also for clinical undergraduates. The easygoing narrative and use of bullet points and figures allows its wealth of information to be effortlessly extracted.

James S Dawson, Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham

Companion to Specialist Surgical Practice (2nd edn)

Series Editors O James Garden and Simon Paterson-Brown
WB Saunders 2001
Price £49.95 each
ISBN 0702026441

To be asked to review the complete set of eight volumes of surgical text initially seems a daunting task. However, each volume is an easily manageable size that also fits into a briefcase. The aim of this set of books is to present the reader with an up-to-date account of the most relevant and topical areas each of the main surgical sub-specialities. This has been achieved by preparing the work within a short timeframe (the first edition was published in 1997).

The eight volumes are: core topics in general and emergency surgery; vascular and endovascular surgery; upper gastrointestinal surgery; colorectal surgery; hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgery; endocrine surgery; breast surgery; transplantation surgery: current dilemmas, which contain between 9 and 20 chapters.

Each chapter has been written by an author with specialist expertise and an expert has similarly edited each volume. The chapters are all clearly written and presented but a list of the main topics at the start of each chapter

would have been helpful. Figures and diagrams are clearly presented in black and white but this does not detract from the quality of information.

The book uses a 'scalpel sign' to denote both text and references where there is reasonably strong evidence to support recommendations for clinical practice. Each chapter is also referenced comprehensively.

This is an excellent set of textbooks that achieves the objectives set out by the main editors. I would highly recommend them for both the busy practising consultant as well as all other surgical grades and trainees.

Andrew Swift, University Hospital Aintree, Liverpool

The Year in Hypertension 2002

Gregory YH Lip and Wai K Lee
Clinical Publishing Services 2002
Price £49.50 Pp 337
ISBN 1904392008

This text is a comprehensive summary of the latest important publications in hypertension. Professor Lip and Dr Lee, both from the City Hospital in Birmingham, have produced a useful book for the specialist in hypertension.

The 'Year in...' series are all designed in a similar format. Their objective is to summarize all the important recent publications. In this

case the papers that are discussed were published predominantly in 2001 but also in 2000. The data that are discussed are therefore very recent and the text more contemporary than competing books on the subject.

The book is split into four main sections: basic science, co-existing conditions, therapy and current practical issues. The main publications in each section are then presented. The authors present a significant volume of data in a thoroughly digestible and helpful format. For each paper there is a summary of the background, the authors' interpretation of the trial and then the authors' commentary, which allows the reader to place each paper in the context of current best evidence. The authors manage to help the reader develop a significant depth of knowledge in an efficient manner. The authors have also included tables and charts summarizing the main trial end-points. These figures greatly help the reader in data interpretation.

This book is an extremely thorough summary of best evidence available in hypertension. As such it is an important addition for all hypertension specialists and should be available as a reference text for all medical and cardiology departments.

Nick Robinson, St Bartholomew's Hospital, London