

Book Reviews

Atlas of Outpatient and Office Surgery. Second edition.

Edited by Robert B. Benjamin. 404 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, Lea & Febiger (A Waverly Company), 1994. \$89.50. ISBN 0-8121-1540-6.

This atlas has many informative aspects and serves the function of an atlas very nicely. Some, but not all, of the content is relevant for family physicians. Of the nearly 70 surgical procedures described, slightly less than one-half might be performed by family physicians who are procedure oriented. It is true that an increasing number of surgical procedures are being done in the outpatient or office setting, and it is eye opening to see the large number of procedures, from simple to complex, that are now considered as appropriate for these settings. I do not believe, however, family physicians will be doing any of the following procedures: upper lid blepharoplasty, correction of upper lid ptosis, lower lip shave, bunion osteotomy, hammer toe correction, excision of Dupuytren's contracture, orchiectomy, or hemodialysis shunt placement. I found 32 procedures I would not feel qualified to do or would not feel comfortable doing given customary medicolegal considerations.

Of more concern to me is that all 24 authors in this atlas are surgical subspecialists. Thus their experiences most likely involve the most severe types of cases in each category, i.e., the complex cases primary care physicians choose to refer. Therefore, the suggested procedure is often more extensive and complex than it needs to be for the types of cases commonly seen by family physicians, e.g., treatment of paronychia or felon. Our patients are most likely to have a comparatively minor involvement that can be handled with less involved surgery.

The atlas is very well organized and is highly readable. The illustrations are absolutely the best I have ever seen. The illustrator, Alan O. Hage, has used a partial cutaway technique, done from video tapes, that shows the surface structures, the internal anatomy, and the surgical procedure in a remarkably clear way.

Family physicians who do many procedures will most likely find this atlas valuable. I certainly recommend that they take an opportunity to review it before making a purchase.

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Essentials of Internal Medicine. *Edited by William N. Kelley, editor-in-chief. 824 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott, 1994. \$32.95 (paper). ISBN 0-397-51272-4.*

Essentials of Internal Medicine presents an important core of information for ten disciplines of internal medicine. It is designed to be both a "background reference for individual study and review," as well as a

handy reference to give quick access to information needed in the daily care of patients. I found it most successful in meeting the former goal.

Each specialty area, e.g., cardiology, gastroenterology, nephrology, is considered from two points of view. The first half of each subspecialty section describes common diseases, including pathogenesis and clinical features. The second half details an approach to diagnosis and management of common clinical problems with a differential diagnosis including many of the diseases from the first half. Algorithms and tables present an orderly approach to care of common signs and symptoms of illness. The dichotomy of information, partly grouped by disease and partly by chief problem, made this a difficult reference for a quick answer but an excellent orderly approach to the study of internal medicine problems.

The book is not designed to be a comprehensive reference, and I found it lacking in addressing some specific questions I encountered in my office practice. The text appears to have been written by specialty-oriented authors. While some outpatient-oriented problems, such as low back pain and upper respiratory tract infection, are addressed, large areas I would consider to be general internal medicine are described very briefly or not at all — preventive medicine, genetics, nutrition, environmental medicine, and ethics.

Much of the information is presented in tables and diagrams, which improves readability but limits the discussion of various aspects or choices of diagnostic route or therapeutic approach. The book is largely a presentation of each author's preferred approach.

This book should be of greatest use to medical students, both preclinical and those on clinical rotations in particular. Certainly the price is very reasonable for a large volume of clearly presented and accessible information. As a practicing physician I prefer a more complete internal medicine text on my shelf.

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Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology. *Edited by Joseph S. Sanfilippo and associate editors David Muram, Peter A. Lee, and John Dewhurst. 707 pp., illustrated. Philadelphia, W.B. Saunders, 1994. \$95. ISBN 0-7216-3971-2.*

Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology was written for clinicians who require expertise in providing care for this population of patients. The authors succeed in delivering a well-organized informational source that the reader would typically need to assemble from a collection of primary care and specialty reference works in gynecology.

The text, which stresses a recurring theme of normal versus abnormal, is divided into three sections: Growth and Development, Medical Problems, and

Surgical Problems. The first section provides a basic review of embryology, anatomy, and normal growth, followed by discussions of abnormalities in these areas, including general growth problems, precocious and delayed puberty, and abnormal sexual differentiation. The second section deals fairly comprehensively with such common medical problems as vulvovaginitis, vaginal bleeding, contraception, sexually transmitted diseases, eating disorders, depression, and drug abuse. It also highlights areas less commonly found in pediatric or family medicine texts, such as expressive therapy, human immunodeficiency virus infection in adolescents, sports-related problems in reproductive function, and reproductive health care needs of the developmentally disabled. The chapters on surgical problems include information that is probably further removed from the daily practice of most clinicians seeing female pediatric and adolescent patients. Nevertheless, the sections on genital trauma, urologic problems, breast disorders, and chronic pelvic pain are particularly relevant and useful.

Generally the text is very readable, and the subject matter is easily referenced by the Index. There are many photographs in each section, including selected color plates. The graphs and tables are designed to add clarity to the subject textual presentation. Each chapter concludes with a listing of references, although few are from sources after 1991. Special appendices present source material on such topics as medical interviews of sexually abused children, Tanner stages of development, and commonly used medications in the field.

Family physicians and allied health professionals who provide care for pediatric and adolescent patients will find this a useful addition to their library. It is important to remember that the practice of adult gynecology does not always translate directly to the pediatric and adolescent population. Knowledge and appreciation of the differences will certainly improve the quality of care for this group.

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Practical Dermatology. By Beth G. Goldstein and Adam O. Goldstein. 310 pp., illustrated. St. Louis, Mosby Yearbook, 1994. \$55 (paper). ISBN 0-8151-3542-4.

Although there are many dermatology texts on the market, I have not encountered one quite like *Practical Dermatology*. This book, written collaboratively by a family physician and a dermatologist, takes a patient-centered approach to dermatology. There is even a subsection entitled "Patient-Centered Therapeutics,"

a term that almost certainly has never been used in a dermatology text. Given that the target audience includes primary care physicians of all stripes, as well as medical students and residents, it makes sense to take a patient-oriented approach to the topic. The authors recognize that diagnosis is often less important than patient education and compliance in determining final outcome. Patient education, in particular, is stressed throughout the book.

The book is attractively and brightly bound, making it easy to find on a cluttered desk or full bookshelf. As are the other medical books in the Mosby series, it is a high-quality paperback. There are more than 100 color photographs and many more black-and-white photographs and drawings.

The book is divided into three main sections. The first deals with dermatologic basics, such as common diagnostic procedures, terminology, types of topical preparations available, and preventive dermatology. The second section discusses common skin dermatoses, and the third addresses cutaneous manifestations of systemic disease. At the end of the book is an appendix that contains patient handout material describing the more common skin ailments.

Practical Dermatology is an excellent book with many strengths, several of which deserve special mention here. The first section of the book contains a fine discussion of topical therapy, including such things as the differences among gels, lotions, and emollients. The section on techniques for common procedures is concise and includes addresses for ordering elusive supplies. The authors have broken from tradition by using photographs showing typical cases of skin disease, rather than the "worst case ever" pictures found in most dermatology texts. The patient education handouts are thorough, written in a style that is easy to understand, yet not insultingly simple.

The book has few drawbacks. Some of the photographs are poorly exposed and difficult to interpret. Dermatology is a visual art, and much like pictures of the Grand Canyon, photographs often do not do justice to skin lesions. The only other suggestion I would make for the authors is not really a criticism: the patient education handouts are so helpful, I wish they covered more topics.

Overall, this is an excellent book that I would recommend to anyone who is likely to diagnose and treat skin diseases. Nondermatologists will benefit from its clear and concise treatment of skin diagnosis and treatment, while many dermatologists would benefit from its patient-centered approach.

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