

Book Reviews

Human Disease for Dentists. Edited by David Gawkrödger. Blackwell Munksgaard.

This multichapter book aims to provide a guide to human disease for dental students, qualified dentists, and professions complimentary to dentistry. It is laid out in four sections: Section 1 addressing basic skills in taking a medical history and clinical examination, Section 2 contains system-based chapters addressing diseases and conditions, Section 3 pharmacology and anaesthetics followed by Section 4 comprising of revision questions (both case scenarios and multiple choice questions).

The introduction initiates a good chapter structure of history inspection and special tests, but this does tend to vary in succeeding chapters. The system-based chapters provide a comprehensive cover of conditions relevant to dentistry. The chapters vary in relevance and content and the editor is to be commended in including chapters on dermatology, ENT, ophthalmic disorders, and pregnancy, which are often omitted in other similar texts. Unfortunately, the coloured illustrations are appended at the back of the text, which is inconvenient, and the illustrations are also inclined to reflect the specialty of the editor (dermatology).

There are omissions including managing collapses other than cardiovascular collapse (vasovagal, hypoglycaemia, hypoadrenal collapse), tuberculosis in the infectious diseases section, and a misleading diagram illustrating the submandibular lymph nodes as posterior cervical nodes.

Apart from these minor criticisms the book is well thought out and makes reading a rather difficult topic highly relevant and interesting.

TARA RENTON
*Senior Lecturer Honorary Consultant
Department of Oral Maxillofacial Surgery
Dental Institute
Queen Mary University London
Turner Street
London E1 2AD
UK*

Integrated Dental Treatment Planning: A Case-Based Approach. By Elizabeth J. Kay, Ann C. Shearer, Andrew M. Bridgman and Gerald M. Humphris. Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK. 2005. ISBN 0-198-52889-2. 159 pp.

The lead author of this unusual book has sensibly emphasized that it is not a textbook. Those prospective readers looking for a 'how-to' book will certainly not find it here. What they will find is a book that is about people rather than about dentistry, in which the authors challenge the reader to consider psychological, social, legal, and ethical aspects of treatment planning and provision alongside the purely dental.

The book consists of six chapters, each being in two sections. In the first section of each chapter, the authors recount a 'case story' loosely based on a real patient (or an amalgam of real patients) whom they have encountered in their professional practice. Interjected with the case story are questions designed to stimulate the reader to seek out background information or to initiate discussion with peers or tutors. The questions raised are answered in the second section of each chapter. Here, the case story is repeated with the addition of comment from the authors (a barrister, a restorative consultant, a psychologist, and a dentist) in which insight into various aspects of the case is offered.

I found the text well structured and easy to read, my only reservation being that, in some chapters, the inclusion of clinical photographs unrelated to the hypothetical case is both confusing and unnecessary. The book can be recommended to its target readership of final-year dental students. However, the holistic approach that it propounds is one to which experienced paediatric dentists should require no introduction.

LINDSAY HUNTER
*Clinical Senior Lecturer/Consultant in Paediatric
Dentistry
Dental Health and Biological Sciences
UWCM Dental School
Heath Park
Cardiff CF14 4XY
UK*

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