

BOOK REVIEW

Oral and Maxillofacial Medicine

Second Edn The Basis of Diagnosis and Treatment By
Crispian Scully

It is easy to understand why the first edition of this book was the recipient of the First Prize of the Royal Society of Medicine (RSM) and Society of Authors for a new authored book. If the RSM has a prize for second editions, *Oral and Maxillofacial Medicine* is likely to take that honor as well.

This book addresses the diagnosis and management of oral and maxillofacial diseases. Unlike some other books in this space, it does not deal with the dental management of medically compromised patients. Rather, it focuses, in a most informative, comprehensive, organized and readable format, on the assessment and treatment of the signs and symptoms of diseases of the mouth and its contiguous structures.

The book is organized into three main sections which deal with oral disease, a section that speaks to HIV, iatrogenic diseases and oral manifestations of systemic diseases, and two useful supporting sections (Eponymous and other conditions, and Adverse drug reactions). While parts of the sectional organization are traditional, some aspects are unique. For example, the first three chapters of the book deal with the three elements of diagnosis – history, examination and investigations. These are presented in such a way to be comfortably comprehensible to the neophyte, but specific and not superficial thereby providing an excellent review for the seasoned clinician. Uncharacteristically, the first section also includes two overview chapters on treatment. The first of these is a great introduction to therapy, while the second reviews classes of drugs used for oral disease therapy. I found this approach useful in that it provided an overview and framed the context for specific disease therapy that is discussed in subsequent chapters.

If the first section is considered to be introductory, the second and third sections definitely make up the meat of the book. The second section, Common Complaints, would be worth the price of admission for any practicing dentist, internist or primary care physician. As the section's title connotes its nine chapters focus on specific signs and symptoms that bring patients to see us, and range from cervical lymphadenopathy to pain to red,

white and pigmented lesions. Diagnostic points are clearly made and captured in neatly presented tables. Algorithms map differential diagnoses and lead to in depth discussions of specific conditions in the book's third section. The uniform chapter organization (introduction, predisposing factors, etc.) increase the ease of use. Clinicians and patients will be especially grateful for the 'patient information sheet' provided in each chapter. Section 5 consists of only two chapters both organized as an alphabetical glossary of diseases and conditions not covered elsewhere in the book. The abbreviated format of this section is helpful if one knows what one is looking for, but somewhat limiting. For example, I wish that inflammatory and infectious diseases of the salivary glands had been covered in a full chapter, rather than as specific entries of sialadenitis or salivary duct obstruction.

The physical features and quality of the book – the stock, use of color, figures, tables and diagrams – are exceptional. Clinical and histological photographs are clear, but figures illustrating histopathology lack arrows or very descriptive legends that might help identify important features. The writing is succinct and directed with no wasted space or words. The further reading that accompanies each chapter is relevant and timely.

This book is appropriate for a broad audience. For students, it provides the principles of oral diagnosis from fundamentals such as history taking and tooth numbering to specific treatment recommendations arranged in a rationale hierarchy. House staff will find sections of the investigations chapter helpful when deciding the type of imaging study to order or how best to evaluate facial pain. Practitioners will use this book as a resource and reference, but the format, figures and text are so compelling that I would not be surprised if portions of the book were not read during downtime between patients.

Professor Scully has contributed substantially to the dental literature. This book is certainly one of his best.

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