

### **Dermatology: A pictorial review**

Asra Ali. New York, 2006, McGraw-Hill Professional. 300 pages. \$64.95. ISBN: 978-00714-229-32.

Dr Ali should be applauded for writing a dermatology board review book. Other than review guides distributed by pharmaceutical companies to residency programs, we are unaware of any other books that attempt to encompass and highlight all the material required to pass the American Board of Dermatology exam.

In terms of raw material, the board-eligible dermatology resident is responsible for information ranging from biochemical pathways to the latest injectable filler. The first question a resident must answer while studying for the board examination is, "Where do I begin?" Dr Ali assists by organizing this behemoth subject matter into specific categories. At the very minimum, a resident may use Dr Ali's table of contents as a road map of subject matter to review. Once inside the book, the chapters are written in outline fashion with red bold headings followed by many bullet points. Some readers may prefer this brief style, while others may lose focus feeling as if they are simply reading a list of facts.

In terms of organization, one common way to start this type of broad review is to focus on basic science and immunology. Basic science is not discussed until chapter 18, but it is one of the strongest chapters in the book. Its strength lies in the fact that there are few resources that break down this content into well-organized, brief, and easily understood synopses. This section is a good building block for understanding the more intricate pathophysiology of the various diseases. Instead of basic science, this book opens with hair findings, followed by eye findings, nail findings, and fungal disease. There is also an obligatory discussion of the epidermis and dermis, focusing on cell types and functions as well as adhesion molecules and the elusive dermal-epidermal junction. The keratins and their associated disorders are also highlighted, while, collagen, elastic tissue, and ground substance are addressed in detail. The section concludes with a discussion of adnexal structures and matrix metalloproteins. If this information is not enough to whet the palate of a stressed out dermatology resident cramming for the boards, it is followed by summary sections on integrins and glycosaminoglycans. Other later highlights include sections on oral pathology, eye findings, fungal diseases, biostatistics (often overlooked), and electronmicroscopy.

The one question people ask when perusing a board review book like this is, "If I know everything in this book, will I pass the exam?" The answer is a wholehearted, "Maybe." While we applaud Dr Ali for compiling such a comprehensive study guide, we would also encourage any dermatology resident preparing for the boards to supplement with additional atlases, a separate genodermatosis book, a systematic review of glass pathology slides, and interactive study sessions with colleagues.

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### **Color atlas of vascular tumors and vascular malformations**

Odile Enjolras, Michel Wassef, and René Chapot, editors. New York, 2007, Cambridge University Press. 299 pages. \$160.00. ISBN: 978-05218-485-10.

Once I finally set aside the time to read this textbook, I couldn't put it down. The amazing clinical, radiologic, and pathologic "stories" completely drew me in. Drs Enjolras, Wassef, and Chapot have compiled years of experience in their multidisciplinary Vascular Anomalies Clinic into a fascinating atlas.

The authors successfully cover the entities that one would view as vascular birthmarks and that have been agreed upon by the International Society for the Study of Vascular Anomalies as either vascular tumors or vascular malformations. Each chapter has a summary that includes the clinical aspects, pathologic features, appropriate investigations, and treatment of each entity. This is followed by beautiful histopathologic images. A highlight of each chapter is entitled "clinical patterns, investigations, and treatment." This section shows sequential clinical and radiologic images of numerous patients with fairly detailed information about their clinical courses. One can see before and after pictures with normal progression or with various interventions. I found this section of each chapter enormously interesting and educational. The images were spectacular.

This textbook would be of use to any of the subspecialists who would comprise a multidisciplinary team for vascular anomalies. In particular,