

A CLINICAL APPROACH TO MEDICINE

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The above is a textbook of medicine written by Singapore doctors and published in Singapore. It is difficult not to be over-enthusiastic about it as there are so few books of medicine written and published in Singapore. It measures 8½ by 6 inches, 1.7 inches thick, is 1119 pages long and weighs 3 lbs 10 oz (soft cover edition)! The price is not stated.

The following 13 specialties are covered in the book: Cardiology, Emergency Medicine, Endocrinology, Gastroenterology, Haematology, Internal Medicine, Medical Oncology, Neonatology, Neurology, Obstetrics & Gynaecology, Renal Medicine, Respiratory Medicine and Rheumatology. There are 54 chapters within the 13 specialities. There are 68 contributions from the Singapore General Hospital, National Heart Centre, National Cancer Centre, etc.

As stated in the Preface, “the book was written with the purpose of providing a basic text for practicing clinicians, general practitioners, physicians in training and medical students in the Asia-Pacific region”. I think the book has fulfilled its stated objective as the vast majority of the 54 chapters are very well written, comprehensive, provides much local data and are readable. I enjoyed reading the book.

I can find few faults, except for two areas. Firstly, all the illustrations are in black and white—some colour illustrations would achieve greater impact. The black and white illustrations could also be improved. Secondly, the book could be shortened if the references are restricted to about 10 for each chapter. For example, the chapter on diabetes mellitus cited 152 references, while the chapter on acute respiratory distress syndrome has 88 references! This is a basic textbook for students, trainees, etc. and not reviews in specialist journals.

My criticisms of the book are minor and do not detract from the value of the book. I strongly recommend this textbook to all practising clinicians, general practitioners, physicians in training and medical students. It is a worthy addition to the library of hospitals, medical schools, physicians, medical students, etc.

The editors and contributors of this textbook are to be warmly congratulated. I am sure it would enjoy wide support and would see many revised and updated editions in the years to come.

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