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Book Reviews

IMAGING OF THE HEAD AND NECK (2ND EDITION)

G Valvassori, F Mafee and L Carter
Stuttgart: Thieme, 2005
ISBN: 3 13 100942 X EUR229.95 CHF363.00

The first edition was a pioneering work in head and neck imaging and greatly treasured in our library, till it disappeared during the move to the new hospital. The timing of the new, revised, edition was therefore very appealing: it is a heavy tome to post, so this one stays in-house!

The preface presents an impressive catalogue of additions and revisions including, as chapters, such topics as imaging of the temporomandibular joint, the thyroid complex and the lacrimal system. Procedures that once seemed technically impossible, such as interventional MRI or virtual endoscopy, have now become the norm. As one who, throughout medical school, could never understand why electron microscopy pictures only came in black and white, the first suggestion of colour Doppler ultrasound pictures were dismissed as a practical joke. But here they are standard practice.

Almost 3800 (their count, not mine) illustrations are superbly printed in this typical Thieme-quality publication. Competing atlases on ENT radiology, even from the same house, can fall into the trap of proudly exhibiting the author's varied collection of curiosities, however irrelevant to clinical practice. This book does show the rarities, but is best at demonstrating the normal anatomy, the clinical significance of imaging in disease management – all supported by nice line diagrams, sectional anatomy and histology. The few otoscopic photographs make up almost the only splash of colour in this book, but they are a bit disappointing and very dated indeed. By contrast, the text of most chapters is supported by hundreds of references, most of them very recent.

This is a massive work and great value. It is essential for departments of radiology and otolaryngology of course, but there is so much here for the maxillofacial, plastic and reconstructive, orbital and ophthalmic surgeons. It is sobering to compare how a radiology standard text has changed in a decade, with the familiarity of ENT publications. This book, where illustrations are so fundamental, cries out to appear on a disk. Oh to have these scans for lectures, whatever the cost! Unfortunately, one can probably anticipate the smell of burning as everyone's CD writers furiously copy it, with obvious revenue loss to the publishers!

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SINUS SURGERY: ENDOSCOPIC AND MICROSCOPIC APPROACHES

Howard L Levine, M Pais Clemente
Stuttgart: Thieme, 2003
ISBN: 3 13 124791 6 EUR149.95 CHF237.00

This is a multi-author text, with contributions from 28 colleagues in the field of rhinology with substantial experience in the management of benign nasal and sinus disease.

The chapters covering basic sciences are well-written and nicely illustrated, as is the chapter covering imaging. The chapter entitled 'The Relationships of Allergy and Asthma to Rhinosinusitis' I found particularly clear and the joint authors give a good introductory account of allergic fungal sinusitis, a topic which crops up later in the book in a chapter of its own.

A whole chapter is devoted to combined microscopic and endoscopic technique (COMET Surgery), the preferred approach of M. Pais Clemente. He describes, very thoroughly, the basic surgical principles, indications, pre-operative evaluation and planning for sinus surgery – worth reading. There then follows a full description of the surgery itself with operating theatre photographs showing the poor assistant responsible for holding the nasal speculum in place throughout, in addition to wielding the sucker. I can see a problem getting trainees to volunteer as assistants for this procedure.

There are chapters on laser surgery and, for our more adventurous colleagues, stereotactic surgery, and, finally, no book on ESS would be complete without chapters on revision surgery and the avoidance and management of complications.

This book is aimed at surgeons wanting an introduction to sinus surgery and has, in part, developed from a course run by one of the main co-authors. Up to now I have not been fully converted to endoscopic sinus surgery so I was particularly interested to read the chapter on "Surgical Approaches" and hoped I would find it enlightening. Surgery is not something to be learned from textbooks alone but I did not find the text or the illustrations here, or later in the section dealing with minimally invasive surgery, as helpful as I would have liked. Trainees new to nasal and sinus surgery will find this book interesting and useful as a reference but would need to use it alongside other texts.

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