

HANDBOOK OF CHEMICAL PATHOLOGY

by E S C Koay, R N Walmsley

PG Economy Edition, 1989. Singapore : PG Publishing

This book is aimed primarily at medical students, house officers and junior medical staff. It is comprehensive, well-written, clear and easy to understand. The diagrams and tables allow easier commitment to memory of facts that are usually tested in an exam. I would go a step further in recommending this book also to those preparing for the MRCP Exams, Part I FRACS Exams and the M Med Exams in Internal Medicine and Paediatrics and maybe General Surgery.

Chemical Pathology is an essential foundation stone on which clinical practice and patient management are built upon. How to use a laboratory appropriately, what are the correct tests to use, how to interpret the results and then search for the causes of abnormality, are important skills patients and doctors may not realise. Patients seem impressed by the large battery of tests ordered. They are fearful of the amount of blood taken and the final bill but with a more knowledgeable, educated and inquisitive public, doctors cannot continue to hide behind batteries of tests, their lack or ignorance of clinical skills. Each test ordered should be indicated and justified. Towards this end, this book is

worthwhile reading - about 450 pages interspersed with tables and diagrams.

To many of the older doctors, this book, written in Systems International units so that moles rather than milligrams or milli equivalents are used, may provide good revision of and conversion to the new nomenclature of laboratory results that are here to stay as one by one, the laboratories switch over to these units.

There are references made to the companion handbook, also published by the same authors in 1988, called Cases in Chemical Pathology. It would seem that both books are needed since the overlap between them only involves the laboratory evaluation of the abnormal biochemical analytes. At the end of each chapter a short list of references is provided, with some up to date 1988. There are sections also on Pregnancy & In vitro Fertilisation, Paediatrics & Therapeutic Drug Monitoring and Drug Toxicology.

All in all this is a useful and concise study book.

Dr Y C Chee
Tan Tock Seng Hospital

LASER - ITS CLINICAL USES IN EYE DISEASES

by I J Constable, A S M Lim

PG Publishing (2nd edition), 1990

Almost a decade has passed since the first edition of this book was published in 1981. Predictably, the laser has since then been playing an increasingly important role in the treatment of eye diseases. It is therefore not surprising that this new and much revised edition has almost twice the number of pages and illustrations as compared to the first one.

The book is essentially divided into two sections. The first section covers the use of lasers in posterior segment diseases while the second covers its uses in the anterior segment.

The style of writing is concise and easy to read with every few paragraphs well captioned. Emphasis is given to common diseases e.g. two chapters being devoted to diabetic retinopathy. The other area of emphasis is on the practical aspect of laser therapy and there are enough details to help even the most novice beginner get started.

However, the thing that really strikes me about this book is the exceptional photography. The M. Med candidate would do well to browse through the superbly produced and informative fundal pictures especially those on diabetic retinopathy.

To conclude, this book aptly meets the needs of the ophthalmologist for both a practical manual as well as an update on the latest developments in ophthalmic laser therapy. I would also, on the strength of its clear descriptions and photographs, strongly recommend it to anyone who wishes greater confidence in funduscopy.

Dr Tony K W Ho
Tan Tock Seng Hospital