 BOOK REVIEWS

Textbook of Physical Diagnosis, History and Examination, 2nd Edition. By MARK H. SWARTZ. Philadelphia, W. B. Saunders, 1994. 644 pages; \$99.00

In this era of modern medical technology there has been progressive subordination of the clinical history and examination to tests and procedures. As a director of a second-year medical student physical diagnosis course, I find it difficult sometimes to impress the importance of careful patient evaluation upon students who may already regard magnetic resonance imaging and multichemistry panels as the ultimate means to discovering the basis of a patient's symptoms. Still, my belief that we can effectively instruct our beginning students in the art and science of bedside diagnosis is buoyed when reading such an excellent guide as Dr. Mark H Swartz's 1994 second edition of *Textbook of Physical Diagnosis, History and Examination*.

Welcome additions to the second edition are chapters devoted to pregnant patients and geriatric patients. Revisions to other chapters include a section addressing recognition of ethnic and cultural diversity in doctor-patient relationships. An appendix of signs and symptoms of nutritional deficiencies has been included. To the 96 original color slides have been added 25 new color photographs. This textbook makes significantly more use of color illustrations than do its rivals, and the new slides feature particularly excellent representations of many pathologic skin, eye, ear, mouth, peripheral vascular, breast, abdominal, and male genitourinary conditions.

The author states that the purpose of the book is "to provide a framework for clinical assessment of the patient in a humanistic manner." Dr. Swartz succeeds admirably in achieving this goal. Enthusiastically primary care-oriented in phi-

losophy, the book emphasizes a holistic approach to the patient but in a rigorously scientific manner. Rather than an arid exposition of physical examination techniques, the book expounds a practical approach to clinical medicine that focuses on patients as persons as opposed to patients as entities manifesting disease processes.

The first three chapters comprise excellent guidelines for establishing effective communication with patients and include an instructive example of a complete interview. Subsequent chapters, arranged by organ system, delineate updated epidemiologic data, anatomy and physiology, specific symptoms, and refreshingly unique sections addressing the impact of disease on patients' everyday life. Thereafter, physical examination techniques and pathologic findings are explained in a clear manner, supported by an abundance of fine drawings and photographs. The chapter on the examination of the skin exemplifies the book's outstanding quality by carefully defining and illustrating descriptive terms and common diseases. Each chapter features several excellent tables that compare common diagnoses by clinical findings. Sensitivity, specificity, and predictive values for various examination maneuvers, such as detection of ascites, complement the demonstration of examination techniques. Chapters conclude with useful terminology sections and examples of a typical write-up format. In most chapters, the bibliography has been updated to include articles written as recently as 1993. Finally, concluding chapters about clinical decision making and the clinical record offer more practical information for the student.

In my opinion, organization, ample use of color illustrations, easy readability, a practical clinicopathologic approach, and a patient-centered philosophy make *Textbook of Physical Diagnosis* the premier book in its field. I highly recommend it not only for beginning medical students but as an invaluable resource for third- and fourth-year medical students, students in other clinically oriented health care fields, and residents. As a means of maintaining clinical acumen, practicing physicians and those who teach students and residents would also undoubtedly benefit from periodic review of this excellent book. —
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